


# Braille Monitor



FEBRUARY, 1974

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND



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# THE BRAILLE MONITOR

*A Publication of the*  
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND  
KENNETH JERNIGAN, *President*

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THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND IS NOT AN ORGANIZATION  
SPEAKING FOR THE BLIND—IT IS THE BLIND SPEAKING FOR THEMSELVES.

## THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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“I give, devise, and bequeath unto NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND, a District of Columbia nonprofit corporation, the sum of \$\_\_\_ (or, “\_\_\_ percent of my net estate”, or “the following stocks and bonds: \_\_\_”) to be used for its worthy purposes on behalf of blind persons.”

If your wishes are more complex, you may have your attorney communicate with the Berkeley Office for other suggested forms.

CONTENTS

HOUSING, THE BLIND, AND CIVIL RIGHTS . . . . .	60
BY KENNETH JERNIGAN	
NAC: THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS . . . . .	62
NAC: FACTS AND FANCIES . . . . .	63
A REPORT ON THE WASHINGTON TEAM . . . . .	69
BY E. U. PARKER	
NAC: "MASTERS OF DECEIT" . . . . .	71
BY ROBERT ACOSTA	
NAC: SENATOR VANCE HARTKE TAKES CUDGEL IN HAND . . . . .	73
NAC: TELLS SHOPWORKERS TO DO "RESEARCH" . . . . .	75
NAC: CONGRESS FIRES MORE ROUNDS . . . . .	78
NAC: THE BATTLE IN CALIFORNIA . . . . .	81
CONNECTICUT MOVES FORWARD . . . . .	85
BY HOWARD E. MAY, JR.	
CEIP COMMITTEE PLEADS FOR GLASSES . . . . .	86
BY BILL COREY	
NFB HOWARD BROWN RICKARD SCHOLARSHIP FUND . . . . .	87
OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND THE BLIND: CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR . . . . .	88
FOOD STAMPS FOR GUIDE DOGS . . . . .	89
BY E. S. FOSCUE	
BLIND "CONTRIBUTE" TO GOVERNOR MANDEL'S CAMPAIGN . . . . .	91
NFB TESTIFIES ON VENDING STAND ACT AMENDMENTS . . . . .	93
THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973—EDITORIAL COMMENT . . . . .	97
BY E. B. WHITTEN	

THE STUDENT DIVISIONS KEEP MARCHING ON . . . . .	103
BY MARY HARTLE	
MISSISSIPPI CONVENTION . . . . .	104
BY E. U. PARKER	
CONNECTICUT CONVENTION . . . . .	106
BY DOROTHY N. CAMPBELL	
KANSAS CONVENTION . . . . .	108
BY WALTER E. LONG	
CALIFORNIA CONVENTION . . . . .	109
BY DON BROWN	
NEW JERSEY CONVENTION . . . . .	113
RECIPE OF THE MONTH . . . . .	115
SUBMITTED BY MILLIE HOLT	
MONITOR MINIATURES . . . . .	115

## HOUSING, THE BLIND, AND CIVIL RIGHTS

BY

KENNETH JERNIGAN

[Editor's Note.—Obtaining housing on the same terms as it is offered to the rest of the community is always another barrier to overcome as the blind attempt to live normal lives. A number of states, through the efforts of the NFB affiliates, have now included the blind in their fair-housing or other civil rights laws, with or without the adoption of the Model White Cane Law. Last year our affiliate in Rhode Island got a considerable lift in its effort to have such legislation passed when President Jernigan wrote a letter on the subject. As the 1974 legislatures swing into action, and as a number of bills on fair housing are again being introduced at the behest of our affiliates, we are publishing President Jernigan's letter so that all may benefit from the arguments it presents.]

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND,  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,  
*Des Moines, Iowa, April 30, 1973.*

Mr. JOSEPH T. HOULIHAN,  
*State Representative,  
Newport, Rhode Island.*

DEAR MR. HOULIHAN: As President of the National Federation of the Blind, I have been informed that you are sponsoring an amendment to the Rhode Island Fair Housing Practices Act pertaining to "equal housing for the blind and handicapped," and that you have requested persons interested in this amendment to provide you with statements illustrating the need for this legislation and what benefits the blind would derive from the same.

Before proceeding further, let me commend you for your efforts in sponsoring and working for the passage of this very worthy legislation. This amendment will go a long way towards insuring the blind of Rhode Island equal opportunity and access to housing accommodations.

In this age of urbanization, the availability of adequate housing has become one of our society's major areas of concern. The available housing in any given city or state will ordinarily vary from the very modern luxury dwellings which contain conveniences and accessories that make for very comfortable living to those dwellings that make up the typical "skid row."

It is truly unfortunate that anyone must live in the substandard housing at the lower end of the above scale. However, it is tragic that someone is forced to live in substandard housing when more suitable housing within his economic means is available because he has been denied equal access to the housing market by arbitrary, irrational, and discriminatory rental and sale practices. The blind are frequently the victims of discriminatory rental practices and, as a result, are quite often forced to accept substandard housing. It is not the loss of sight per se that causes blind people problems in obtaining housing, but rather the myths, apprehension, and attitudes of other people toward blindness.

There is nothing inherent in the physical condition of blindness that renders a person, ipso facto, a poor tenant. Blindness

need be, and in most cases is, nothing more than a physical nuisance, yet, notwithstanding the fact that the average blind person can and does compete successfully in society, many landlords panic at the thought of having a blind tenant. Again, the problem is not in the physical condition of blindness but the attitudes and misunderstanding of the landlords. Most sighted people think of blindness as an event that would bring one's active life to a close and render one a virtual invalid. A sighted person has difficulty in thinking of himself as blind and being able to carry out the activities involved in his daily routine, but thousands of blind people throughout the country prove by their successful involvement in the same activities and daily routines as their sighted counterparts that the stereotype of blindness, as a life-stopping tragedy, is totally false.

The inequalities involved in denying a group of people equal access to housing accommodations increase in direct proportion to the increasing shortage of adequate housing. Between 1965 and 1970, rental vacancy rates in the urban areas of this country fell from 7.4 percent to 4.9 percent. This "seller's" market in rental housing has put the landlord in a superior bargaining position vis-a-vis his tenant, and many tenants find themselves unable to dicker about the most basic necessities. Given this situation of unequal bargaining power in favor of the landlord against all tenants, it is not hard to envisage the problems encountered by a group of people who have commonly been denied equal access to the housing market.

Subsection D of your amendment providing "that any blind person, visually handicapped person, and other physically

disabled persons shall be entitled to full and equal access to housing accommodations as other members of the general public," will prohibit a landlord from refusing to rent to a blind person solely because of his blindness. It does not, of course, mean that a landlord cannot refuse to either rent, or continue a tenancy with a blind person. However, if a landlord chooses not to rent or to evict a blind person, he must do so for legitimate reasons not related to the physical condition of blindness.

Just as there is nothing inherent in blindness that renders one incapable of being a suitable tenant, blindness does not create special attributes that will insure that a blind person is a desirable tenant. In short, blindness is irrelevant to the question of whether a person is going to be a desirable or undesirable tenant. The thrust of your amendment is that the blind should be given equal access to housing accommodations. It does nothing to alter the standard of care a blind tenant owes to his landlord, and that is as it should be. Under your amendment, a landlord has the same rights vis-a-vis an undesirable blind tenant as he does against an undesirable sighted tenant.

Subsection D, paragraph 3 of your amendment which states that a landlord is not required to "modify his property in any way or provide a higher degree of care for a blind person," is a statement of the existing "case law" in the United States. The blind do not ask nor have the courts required a landlord to do anything different for a blind tenant than he would be required to do for a sighted tenant. Generally, the law requires of a landlord, in the leasing of a premises, only that he disclose unsafe conditions known to him



and not known to the tenant. As your amendment states, the standard of care is not altered or changed in any way in the case of a blind tenant. This section of your amendment will be an important tool in the continuing process of dispelling the myths, apprehensions, and misunderstandings towards blindness referred to above.

Again, let me thank you for your efforts at working towards equality of opportunity

for the blind citizens of Rhode Island. In reality you are working for the blind of the entire Nation. The blind cannot be helped in one state without being helped in all of the states. Therefore, all of us throughout the country are grateful to you.

Very truly yours,

KENNETH JERNIGAN,

*President,*

*National Federation of the Blind.*

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### NAC: THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS

"When you say 'hill,'" the Queen interrupted, "I could show you hills, in comparison with which you'd call that a valley."

"No, I shouldn't," said Alice, surprised into contradicting her at last: "a hill *can't* be a valley, you know. That would be nonsense——"

The Red Queen shook her head. "You may call it 'nonsense' if you like," she said, "but I've heard nonsense, compared with which that would be as sensible as a dictionary!" [Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1966) p. 138.]

As with dreaming Alice, so with NAC. Federationists John Taylor and Ralph Sanders attended the NAC Board meeting December 12 and 13 in New York City. These NFB observers were there, but not because of NAC's policy of "openness," so proudly proclaimed on paper. They were present because a number of Members of the United States Congress insisted that they be admitted. In NAC's Looking-Glass logic, that means they represented the Congressmen, not the organized blind.

Some of these "requests" were made by telephone and some by telegram and some by letter. The intent in all was the same—to gain admittance for NFB representatives. For example, Congressman John Brademas of Indiana, a staunch supporter of rehabilitation for the handicapped, wrote to one affiliate president: "Whatever the final legal determination may be, I have noticed several past assurances given by officials of the Social and Rehabilitation Service which grants NAC its Federal funds, that NAC Board meetings would be open to observers, even when the observers had no specific comments to make. Therefore, I have written to the NAC president and urged him to admit the two representatives requested by the NFB." And Congressman Bill Scherle from Iowa sent a telegram urging that Mr. Taylor and Ralph Sanders be admitted and asked that they be given the right "to participate fully in the discussions and to make presentations or recommendations" as a personal courtesy to him.

Senator Hartke, in a letter reprinted elsewhere in this issue, put it properly

when he wrote: "I earnestly seek the opportunity for the National Federation of the Blind to appear in this matter at the

National Accreditation Council's meeting. Otherwise, it appears democracy will again be suppressed in a most primitive fashion."

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### NAC: FACTS AND FANCIES

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION COUNCIL  
FOR AGENCIES SERVING THE BLIND  
AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED,  
*New York, New York, October 16, 1973.*

The Honorable EDWARD R. ROYBAL,  
*House of Representatives,  
Congress of the United States,  
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR CONGRESSMAN ROYBAL: Thank you for your interest in blind people and your concern that they should participate in the policy-making decisions of the National Accreditation Council (NAC).

We share your concern. The problem as we discussed it, however, appears to be *how* blind persons should participate.

Enclosed are copies of several documents that state the demands of the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) and a letter from Dr. Peter J. Salmon, dated May 11, 1973, setting forth our position. At that time Dr. Salmon, who is blind and who is one of the most widely known and highly regarded leaders in work for the blind and the deaf-blind, was our president.

I have underlined in red the demands and the threats we found unacceptable. You may note that the demand for "representation" on NAC's board varies. Sometimes it is "a sizable number"; sometimes it is one-third; earlier—in material which is also available if you

wish—the fifty percent figure mentioned to you was used.

Marked in blue are two documents in which we explain the nature of a standard-setting, accrediting body and urge NFB to work with us toward the goal of services that will enable blind people to achieve self-reliance and fuller opportunities for education, jobs, and independent living.

I'd also like to respond more specifically to your point about establishing a rule that fifty percent of NAC's board should consist of persons *suggested* or *nominated* by organizations of the blind.

First, as you see from the enclosures, suggestions or nominations are not what NFB actually has in mind.

However, even if NFB were proposing that NAC select fifty percent of its board from among a number of suggestions or nominations made by organizations of the blind, both the proportion and the method of selection would do a disservice to blind people.

This is because of two factors: (1) the great *variety* of management and professional experience that NAC's board needs and (2) the very *small* proportion (less than five percent out of 1.7 million blind and visually handicapped persons) who belong to *any* organization of the blind.

Many blind persons who do belong or have belonged to one of the organizations of blind people recognize the distinction which Dr. Melvin Glasser points out in one of the enclosures with this letter—agencies of the blind are primarily social-action groups and NAC is a standard-setting, accrediting body. The respective types of organization can and should cooperate but they should not be confused. Each has a job to do and should not try to force the other into its mold.

Other blind persons feel strongly that they do not want policy control of the field's standard-setting, accrediting organization to fall into the hands of a small cluster of organizations with which, as blind persons, they do not identify. (Most blind persons feel no need to join an organization of the blind; they identify with their business and professional organizations, fraternal groups or service clubs, and political organizations, just as other citizens do.)

One of the reasons that many blind people (including members of organizations of the blind other than NFB) would not like to see a kind of proportional representation attempted by NAC's board is that there is no reliable basis for proportional representation. For example, the NFB claims a membership of more than fifty thousand and insists that the American Council of the Blind (ACB), another organization of blind persons, has no more than one-twentieth that number. Yet NFB has rejected attempts by such organizations as the Council of Better Business Bureaus to substantiate the NFB membership claims. And statements by ACB regarding its own ACB membership are labeled lies by NFB leaders.

The only thing we do know is that NFB reported in 1971 to the Federal Government dues income of a little over \$1300 (less than three cents a member at a time when the claimed membership was fifty thousand or more). This would lead one to believe that membership in NFB is rather informal, perhaps based on readership of *The Braille Monitor*, or some similar source.

It would seem highly improper for NAC to inject itself into an argument as to how many members the various organizations of the blind can properly claim. But if NAC adopted some official quota of board members to be nominated by each of the various organizations of the blind, you can be sure that we'd next be involved in quotas for each organization (see Mr. Jernigan's letter of April 24, page 2). It is doubtful, furthermore, if there could even be agreement on what constitutes "a large representative organization of the blind," and how many bona fide organizations exist.

In short, if NAC started down the quota road—whether the quota be one-third, one-half, or "a substantial number" (how determined?)—there would be no end to the arguments in which it would be involved.

No other organization of the blind has requested or demanded that NAC adopt a plan whereby the organization would make official nominations for NAC Board members. That may be because the leaders of these organizations know that NAC does solicit and is open to suggestions from many sources as to future board members. They feel that they *have* input and that their suggestions are carefully considered and accepted insofar as they can be fitted

into the total picture of the kinds of expertise needed on the board. ~

In addition, frankly, at the present time we would face extreme difficulty in taking any such official quota recommendations from NFB. In the eyes of leaders of other organizations of the blind we would be rewarding an organization which regularly attacks or denigrates them.

However reasonable the idea of having agencies of the blind nominate fifty percent of NAC's board may appear, as you see from the above, the attempt to carry it out in any fair and objective manner could inject NAC into arguments in which it should not be involved, and result in paralysis of NAC's management. Moreover, since NFB demands the right to *elect*—rather than nominate—our board members, the issue becomes moot.

Finally: We have specific projects for obtaining more input into NAC from users of services and for developing standards for participation of users of services in local agencies for the blind. We are canvassing all agencies of the blind to get their support—intellectual and financial—for these projects. NFB is being approached along with the other organizations.

We hope that all agencies of the blind will want to work with us in developing more effective consumer participation *at many points* in NAC and in local agencies that provide direct services to blind and visually handicapped men, women, and children.

If you would like to suggest such participation to the blind persons you'll be meeting with, we'd be most grateful. They can write us direct with suggestions now or could ask to be put on our mailing list so

they will be kept informed of NAC's plans and can participate later, after they are more familiar with NAC's work.

The standards which affect the services of agencies and schools for the blind are not made by NAC's board. They are drawn from tested standards of related groups, experience of many different agencies and knowledgeable individuals including service recipients in the field, and the results of experiments and other research. They are based on consensus, not the fiat of a small group.

Participation in the standard-developing process is the most important participation that any group of blind people could have in NAC—it is the heart of what we do.

We'd welcome the participation of more of your constituents.

Thank you again for your interest. If you have any additional questions, I'll be glad to try to answer them.

Cordially,

ANNE L. NEW,  
*Consultant on Community Relations.*

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NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND,  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,  
*Des Moines, Iowa, December 4, 1973.*

The Honorable EDWARD R. ROYBAL,  
*United States House of Representatives,*  
*Washington, D.C.*

DEAR CONGRESSMAN ROYBAL: I want to begin by telling you how very much the blind of this country appreciate the effort you have put forth to help us reform NAC

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(National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped). In the opinion of many of us, NAC is the greatest threat to the well-being of the blind which we now face.

Under date of October 16, 1973, Miss Anne New of the NAC staff wrote to you. Her letter has come to my attention, and I hope you will permit me to make some comments about it. The first thing I would say is that it attempts to divert attention from the shortcomings of NAC by attacking the National Federation of the Blind. Even if everything Miss New says about the Federation were true, her statements would still be irrelevant. Proving that we are bad will not make NAC good. It either does or does not hold closed meetings. It either will or will not send us minutes of its proceedings. It either does or does not have representatives of the blind on its board (not just individual blind persons, who may be picked by NAC because of a particular viewpoint, but *representatives* of the blind). It either does or does not accredit sheltered shops which pay blind workers less than the minimum wage and deny them the rights of collective bargaining and reasonable grievance procedures. Its standards either do or do not require that a person must have 20/20 eyesight before he can help a blind person learn independent mobility, resulting in the ridiculous situation that an individual may see well enough to get a driver's license and still be denied accreditation to teach mobility to the blind on the grounds of insufficient eyesight. NAC's standards either are or are not so vague and general as to permit coercion and virtual blackmail, so that friends can be rewarded and opponents punished: all in the name of improving services. The agencies connected with NAC's board members either have or

have not been easily accredited, while the blind regard some of them as among the poorest in the Nation. When NAC considers accrediting an agency, it either does or does not talk with organizations of the blind in the local community to get the consumer viewpoint concerning their performance. These are the charges which have been leveled at NAC, and no amount of counterattack and name-calling can answer the questions. NAC must deal with the charges on their merits.

With specific respect to Miss New's letter, certain comments must be made. Miss New seeks to make it appear that it would be extremely difficult and complex to have *representatives* of the blind on NAC's board. She says that at one time the National Federation of the Blind has suggested "a sizable number" and at another "one-third" and at still another "fifty percent." This is nit-picking. Since NAC admits that it now has blind persons but not *representatives* of the blind on its board, any of the alternatives mentioned would be an improvement.

Miss New goes on to say that there are now 1.7 million blind people in the country. She uses this supposed fact to try to prove that only a small percentage of the blind population belong to organizations of the blind. She then reaches the conclusion that, since this is so, it is better to permit NAC to pick people to speak for the blind than to have organizations of the blind do it—which is a startling conclusion. Finally, Miss New tries to add to the complexity of the situation by implying that the National Federation of the Blind probably doesn't even have the fifty thousand members it claims. She says that the Council of Better Business Bureaus has tried to get us to substantiate our membership figures and



that we have been mulish and uncooperative. She then reveals her trump card, saying that we reported only a little more than \$1,300 for dues in 1971 and that this constitutes something like three cents per member, leading one to believe that our membership requirements may be rather informal—as, for instance, being on the mailing list to receive our monthly magazine *The Braille Monitor*.

In the first place the generally accepted figure for the number of blind people in the United States is about one in five hundred of the total population, or somewhat more than 400,000. When one considers that many blind people are elderly and that some are children and some are simply not “joiners,” a membership of fifty thousand becomes quite significant. Further, to the best of my belief and knowledge the Council of Better Business Bureaus has never asked us to substantiate our membership. Why would they? It is not the sort of thing they customarily do. In any case they make an interesting comment about NAC and its so-called “ethical” and “professional” behavior in a letter to me dated November 20, 1973. They write as follows:

You indicated in your telephone call that you had information that the National Accreditation Council was using the CBBB name in a statement regarding its position vis-a-vis the National Federation of the Blind. It is, of course, completely unauthorized that any organization should use the name of the Council of Better Business Bureaus or any Better Business Bureau in any public release. We will appreciate your forwarding copies of this statement if such is available to you.

With respect to the amount of money which the National Federation of the Blind reported for dues for 1971, our

constitution says in Article VII: “Each state affiliate shall pay an annual assessment of thirty dollars. Assessments shall be payable in advance on or before January 1.” We have affiliates in all of the states except four, and in those we have individual members, who pay \$1 dues per year. Thus, in my own State of Iowa we have thirteen local chapters and almost a thousand members, but we pay dues of only thirty dollars to the National Office.

All of this nit-picking is not the real question. Not only does NAC not want representatives of the blind to serve on its board: It does not even understand what we are talking about when we suggest it. NAC makes much of the fact that their corporate charter will not permit us to elect people to their board. This, of course, is a mere technicality. We could give NAC a list of our representatives, and they could elect them to their board. In case of resignation or recall, the new people could be elected. There is nothing illegal about this and, for that matter, nothing revolutionary or unusual. The American Foundation for the Blind, for instance, (NAC’s creator) has traditionally elected the presidents of certain organizations to its board as a matter of routine. What, then, is all the controversy really about? NAC’s current president, Mr. Robinson, has said that it is a power struggle. In a very real sense he is right. NAC and certain of the more reactionary social-service agencies for the blind wish to control the lives of blind people. We do not intend to permit it. We feel that we as blind persons should have the “power” to speak for ourselves and have a say in our own destinies. With several hundred local chapters and more than fifty thousand members we are, far and away, the largest organization of blind people in this country. So far as we know,

there are only two other groups that even claim to be national organizations of the blind. There is the Blinded Veterans Association. I do not know its exact membership, but I believe it to be in the neighborhood of one thousand to two thousand. To the best of my knowledge the BVA is a constructive and worthwhile organization. Many of its members also belong to the National Federation of the Blind.

Then, there is the American Council of the Blind. Quite small, this organization is largely made up of splinter groups which were expelled from the National Federation of the Blind during an internal struggle in the late 1950's. I have heard that the American Council of the Blind claims some 10,000 members. I believe this claim is much exaggerated and that the true figure would be closer to two thousand or three thousand. Many of us regard the ACB as nothing more than a company union for the more reactionary agencies doing work with the blind.

In an interview in Chicago this summer NAC's president, Mr. Robinson, made the point that we all live in houses that are constructed in accordance with building codes and that we have no part in making those codes, that it is a "professional" determination. He then went on to say that blind people stood in the same relation to NAC.

Of course, he is wrong. As citizens and voters we elect the officials who control the making of building codes. If the codes are unreasonable or poorly conceived or fraudulently administered, we have recourse. Not so with NAC. The blind have no representation and no means of making their voices heard. This is what the struggle is all about.

Several months ago Miss New said to the press that patients in a hospital did not participate in determining what services they should receive, and she made this statement as a defense to NAC's policy of excluding representatives of the blind from its board. This is exactly the problem with NAC. It conceives of the blind as patients or children or inferiors. (Incidentally, it might be noted that today even patients are asking for representation in determination of hospital policies.) All of this is beside the point, however. We the blind are not patients or children or wards. We are independent American citizens, and we intend to be treated accordingly. We intend to have something to say about what happens to us and what kind of governmental services we receive.

We are in exactly the same position as organized labor at the beginning of the century. The unions were told that they were small and could not expect to speak in the name of labor since most workers "preferred to be independent and speak for themselves," not joining with other workers but belonging to their individual civic and social and political organizations "like everybody else." This, of course, was nothing but a sophistry, a device used by management to divide the workers and avoid dealing with the real issues. Management used goon squads, character assassination, personal abuse, rumor, and (upon occasion) even physical violence.

In more recent years the minority groups in this country have begun to have group awareness. They have recognized that they have common problems and have organized to deal with those problems. As with other groups, so with the blind. We have organized to speak for ourselves and to take a hand in solving our own problems.

NAC is management's answer. In the name of charity and goodness and kindness it would strangle the life out of our organization. But, of course, we are still very much alive and not about to be beaten into submission.

I have said all of this to show you why our struggle with NAC is so crucial. As blind people we have only recently begun to emerge from the long night of inferiority and second-class status. We do not wish to

return to the denials and exclusions we have always known. We believe that you and the other Members of Congress, once you are aware of the facts, will help us in our struggle. We need that help, and we are relying on it.

Very truly yours,

KENNETH JERNIGAN,  
*President,*

*National Federation of the Blind.*

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## A REPORT ON THE WASHINGTON TEAM

BY

E. U. PARKER

*Time:* 11:35 a.m.

*Date:* December 11, 1973.

*Place:* National Airport, in northern Virginia, just across the Potomac from Washington.

*Action:* A bump and a quiver as the Boeing 727 carrying Mississippi representatives hit the runway for the second time in nine weeks—arriving to help educate people about NAC. James Boyd had been added to the Mississippi delegation.

The reception was warm and friendly, as it should be in our National Capital. This type reception was from everyone from Congressmen to cabdrivers (though at times it was a little difficult to find either).

Then to the hotel that had been chosen as Washington headquarters. The hotel—fair to crummy, though the service was excellent. The food—high to outrageous, but good.

Fifteen or so early arrivers made their way over to Capitol Hill. The Mississippians quickly made contact with the offices of Congressmen Cochran and Lott and Senator Eastland, all of whom as usual extended their warm personal support and whose staffs went all-out to help. As a matter of fact much advance groundwork had already been done, and several appointments made.

We gathered the first evening for a general meeting, with about thirty present. Ralph Sanders, acting as chairman, was prevailed upon to cut the meeting time from the four-and-one-half hours of nine weeks before to about two-and-one-half hours. But everyone had his say and participated in the planning. At this time it was first discovered that a lady representative from the Midwest had already removed her shoes in spite of the cold weather. Those who had trudged through the halls and tunnels of the Capitol complex understood.



Those present first heard that NAC had once again decided to refuse admittance of our observers to their board meeting on December 12 and 13. Later it was learned that the observers would be admitted—at the insistence of certain Senators and Representatives—though it was still not clear whether they would be admitted as NFB representatives or as personal representatives of these Congressmen.

The group gathered once again on the evening of December 12 to compare notes and revise planning. It was at that point in time, as the Washington language puts it, that we learned of the shabby treatment NAC was according our observers in New York. Though they had agreed—at the insistence of certain Congressional leaders—to admit them, the NAC staff still would not volunteer information even as to where the meeting would be held.

There have been several resignations of members of NAC's board in the past year or two. Most of the time our representatives could not get a list of board members and their addresses. It may be reasonable to assume that these three facts put together indicate that the professional staff of NAC is afraid to have some of their board members come in contact with blind people. Could it be that some of the former board members learned that NAC was hurting blind people instead of helping them and refused to be a part of these activities anymore? Could it be that some of the gentlemen now on the board are *gentlemen*, and would not associate themselves with NAC if they knew its true nature? Could be. This is the compelling reason for those living in the same states with board members to contact them and tell them the truth. Nobody can do this job as well as those blind people living near the

NAC Board members—if their identities and addresses can be learned.

For two-and-one-half days, twenty-five, then thirty, then forty, and more covered Capitol Hill, seeing Congressmen and other officials. The former Miss Shy (she is now Joyce Turner and really not shy at all) and Mary Nichols manned—or should I say womaned—headquarters, kept the records, and dispensed information. Throughout the time, reports of redoubled efforts of old friends and support from new friends flowed in.

The highlight of activities in Washington was a meeting on the morning of December 13 with officials of the General Accounting Office (GAO), the investigative arm of Congress. The size of the conference room limited the group to representatives from twelve states, but twenty-five or more additional blind people gave moral support by being on the premises. For one-and-one-half hours the meeting continued, and the GAO people listened and were interested. Those present were assured that an exhaustive investigation was being made of NAC and all of its activities. They gave assurance that, in the course of their investigation, they would talk not only to NAC officials and agency officials but also with blind people and NFB representatives in many parts of the Nation. Those present were encouraged to believe that this time an independent and objective investigation might be made.

The next afternoon, December 13, in the cold and wet weather of Washington, the teams began to return to their homes—from California to New Hampshire, from the Midwest to the Deep South—fully confident that a good job had been done and progress made toward getting NAC off the backs of blind people.

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Just one other reflection: At one point a member of the Mississippi team suggested that the NFBers in Washington were the second team while the larger group in New

York was the first team. However, it was unanimously moved and carried that we were *number one*—even the Mississippi representative changed his vote.

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### NAC: "MASTERS OF DECEIT"

BY

ROBERT ACOSTA

[Editor's Note.—These remarks were addressed to the audience—among whom were a number of national and State legislators or their representatives—at the fourth annual legislative luncheon of the West Valley Chapter of the NFB of California. Robert Acosta is president of the NFB Teachers Division.]

Tell the same story over and over again and people will come to believe it as fact. This age-old propaganda device has been the major tactic of the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped. And what is this "big lie" which NAC is perpetrating upon the American public?

To put it simply, it goes as follows: Kenneth Jernigan, the President of the National Federation of the Blind, has brainwashed the "insignificantly" small membership of the Federation into believing that NAC is hurting blind people by accrediting some of the worst agencies for the blind in this Nation. NAC also states that the National Federation of the Blind is the only organization opposing them. These statements are repudiated by the actions of such organizations as the Ohio Association of Workers for the Blind which by resolution adopted by its General Assembly condemned NAC for its undemocratic and unrepresentative actions

against the blind of this Nation. Schools for the blind in Kansas and Minnesota as well as the State agency which provides services to the blind in Mississippi have either refused or not renewed their NAC accreditation.

Last summer in New York City, 1500 blind people marched on the offices of the National Accreditation Council in order to make our concerns known to the American people. At that time, Miss Anne New, NAC's director of public relations, stated that we represented but a token number of misinformed blind people.

Those of us who were present at NAC's semiannual board meeting on December 12 and 13, 1973, at the Prince George Hotel, in New York City, saw the exposure of the "big lie." This year, not daring to face us as they previously had done, NAC officials were not present on the streets of New York City stating over and over again that the blind did not understand what NAC was trying to do for them. This year, Federationists found that New Yorkers became angry when told of NAC's continuing misuse of our tax dollars.

Our large contingent of citizen advocates in Washington, D.C., at that same time also discovered that the Members of Congress are now growing skeptical of NAC's "big

lie" attacks upon the blind of this Nation. Members of Congress, too, are demanding that justice be served. This year Ralph Sanders and John Taylor were admitted to the secret board meetings of NAC under the auspices of a number of Members of Congress, but not as representatives of the National Federation of the Blind.

The NAC Board, realizing that its Federal grant was in jeopardy, adopted a resolution which permits one silent observer from national organizations of the blind to attend its meetings. The observer, as far as we know, would not be given either board minutes or committee reports.

NAC hopes this decoy action will confuse the blind and the Congress into believing that NAC has truly begun to open its meetings to blind consumer representatives. But this is still another "big lie." What NAC has given to us is not even tokenism; it is more insulting than that. Up to this point, they have not even allowed our representatives to convey to them the concerns of the blind of this Nation.

NAC may believe that the adoption of this resolution is a great step forward toward consumer participation in NAC policy-making. This is not the giant step we hoped for but a faltering half-step in that direction. NAC could learn a lesson from the blind themselves. Let the record show that the Executive Committee of the National Federation of the Blind invites all who wish to participate to attend its meetings. To further point out the Federation's policy of openness, Dr. William Bleecker of the staff of the National Accreditation Council was allowed to participate in a press conference

which the Federation called to protest the actions of NAC. Basically, Dr. Bleecker presented the press with copies of NAC's press packet. He also corroborated all of the statements made by our representatives with respect to NAC's policy of holding closed board meetings.

On the second day of the demonstrations, I met a young lady (we'll call her Susan) from our fine New York City chapter. She tearfully informed me that she had just received word that she had been fired from her position as a darkroom technician because she had taken two days off in order to protest the unfair actions of the National Accreditation Council. I could not find any words to comfort her, but instead, *she* encouraged me with her final statement. Upon turning the corner, she said, "I just hate to go back to a sheltered workshop, but it will all be worth it if we can reform NAC and make them listen to us."

I stood there for a moment and reflected upon her words. I thought of other blind people who have made similar sacrifices recently in this struggle with NAC. I thought of Patricia Harris and of Joseph Varghese who were dismissed from the Greater Detroit Society for the Blind for daring to be active members of the National Federation of the Blind. I realized that as long as there were people like Susan from New York City, standing with us on the barricades, that we would succeed in our struggle with NAC. And yet, if we should lose all and NAC should ultimately deprive us of our independence, they can never strip us of our dignity, because we as blind people have become involved in the National Federation of the Blind. The National Federation of the Blind has taught us to believe in ourselves. No longer shall

the blind of this Nation placidly accept the position of the loser in American society.

It should be clear from my few words that we have NAC on the run. They are so desperate that they have asked their own board members to give Christmas donations in four figures to their overall effort of setting standards and of accrediting agencies for the blind. We should also note that only forty-nine out of some five

hundred agencies for the blind have thus far been accredited by NAC. We as Federationists must keep the pressure on by urging our Congressmen to investigate the National Accreditation Council. At this time, the General Accounting Office is in the process of an in-depth investigation of NAC, not only with regard to its funding, but also concerning its attitudes toward blindness. Let us stand fast on the barricades and never surrender.

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#### NAC: SENATOR VANCE HARTKE TAKES CUDGEL IN HAND

[Editor's Note.—From the time that he became a Senator in 1958, Vance Hartke of Indiana has been one of the Federation's strongest supporters. He quickly discerned our problems and did all he could to aid in solving them. When our Disability Insurance for the Blind bill came to the National Legislature, Senator Hartke did what he could and we know how many times he shepherded it through passage in the Senate and fought for it in Senate-House Conference committees. He has never been a man to shrink from demanding justice. So it has been with NAC. His quick perception and understanding strikes at the core of problems. This can be seen in the following correspondence he has had with officials of the DHEW on the subject of NAC.]

UNITED STATES SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE,  
*Washington, D.C., December 3, 1973.*

KENNETH JERNIGAN,  
*President, National Federation of the Blind,  
Des Moines, Iowa.*

DEAR MR. JERNIGAN: For your information, enclosed is a copy of a letter I have

sent to Mr. Dwight, regarding the continuing problem of Federation representation on the National Accreditation Council.

I will keep you informed of any progress made in a suitable resolution of this matter.

With my best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

VANCE HARTKE,  
*United States Senator.*

Encl.

UNITED STATES SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE,  
*Washington, D.C., November 5, 1973.*

Mr. JAMES DWIGHT,  
*Administrator, Social and  
Rehabilitation Service,  
Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare,  
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. DWIGHT: Since coming to the Senate, I have become increasingly

concerned with the plight of blind persons in this country and I have worked very closely with representatives of the National Federation of the Blind to remedy this plight by solutions contained in Federal enactments. I wrote a letter to your predecessor, Mr. Twiname, on August 29, 1972, calling for an investigation into the National Accreditation Council. Many of the questions posed then are still unanswered.

Over the years, I have learned to place much reliance upon the opinions expressed by members of the National Federation of the Blind, for they truly seem to have an excellent awareness of the problems encountered by blind persons.

Therefore, I became greatly concerned when I learned that the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped (NAC), created and operating as a result of Federal money provided by your agency, is vigorously opposed by the National Federation of the Blind.

I would like to know the basis that your agency used to fund an accrediting agency in the field of the blind which, I am informed, still totally ignores the views of the largest organization of blind persons in the Nation.

I had thought that the "maximum feasible participation of beneficiaries of programs intended for their benefit" provision contained in the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 so firmly established client participation that it could no longer be ignored or disregarded, certainly, in programs receiving Federal financial support.

I utterly fail to understand why Federal money should be used to finance an agency such as NAC which so vitally affects the lives of blind persons, yet which so arbitrarily and arrogantly disregards the views of the organized blind.

The relationship between the National Accreditation Council and the National Federation of the Blind has gone from bad to worse. I see no reason for the NAC to refuse placing on the Council members of the National Federation. Likewise, parliamentary procedure calls for the establishment of meetings at a given location and time, which should be published with sufficient notice to all concerned persons. I strongly believe that unless the National Accreditation Council recognizes the National Federation of the Blind as a voice for the blind, all Federal funds for NAC should be immediately suspended.

Greatly astonished and much troubled at learning of the NAC procedures, I checked into the history of the NAC and was told that, from the very beginning, the views and opinions of the blind of the Nation as expressed by the National Federation of the Blind have been given only token recognition.

Your prompt and personal attention to this matter would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

VANCE HARTKE,  
*United States Senator.*

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UNITED STATES SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE,  
*Washington, D.C., December 3, 1973.*

Mr. JAMES DWIGHT, Jr.,  
*Administrator, Social and  
Rehabilitation Service,  
Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare,  
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. DWIGHT: I have before me your letter of November 20, wherein you enclose a "fact sheet" for my review and assumed answer to my earlier inquiry. From your letter and the fact sheet, I must assume you are not as concerned about the apparent problem as are Members of the Congress.

I enclose for your review and appropriate action, a letter received by one of my Legislative Counsels from Mr. Jernigan, the President of the National Federation of the

Blind. As you are aware, *de jure* discrimination is somewhat different than *de facto* discrimination. It appears to me that the National Accreditation Council would be better able to assist the visually impaired of this land if they would open up their meetings, and cease this perennial desire to suppress the voice of a representative of the blind. No one here argues the merit of the substantive matter involved; however, the procedural implications are quite obvious.

I earnestly seek the opportunity for the National Federation of the Blind to appear in this matter at the National Accreditation Council's meeting. Otherwise, it appears democracy will again be suppressed in a most primitive fashion.

Sincerely,

VANCE HARTKE,  
*United States Senator.*

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### NAC: TELLS SHOPWORKERS TO DO "RESEARCH"

[Editor's Note.—Two shopworkers, trusting NAC to be true to its public image of serving the blind, innocently wrote a most polite letter to Dan Robinson, president of NAC's board. Their letter, written to the accreditors of sheltered workshops, pointed out some deficiencies in the treatment of workers and conditions of employment. But their sincerity and motives were neither understood nor honored. True, they did receive a reply. It came from Huesten Collingwood, writing from the height of his position as Staff Associate to the Commission on Accreditation. The letter reveals a good deal about his background and attitudes toward the blind.

He understands little, if anything, about the condition of workers, workers' guilds, or consumer groups generally. Following the general NAC insistence on documentation, he demands in most condescending terms that the workers write not communications, but briefs, in which they cite the specific pages and sections of standards under criticism. Collingwood then proceeds to instruct them in supercilious tones to have their organization "undertake a careful program of investigation and research, with a goal of publishing the results in the professional literature." The implication is clear. If their organization of shopworkers cannot "do

research" and publish in "professional" journals, then the workers must bow their backs to those which can.

If the institutions accredited by NAC had ever been worth their salt, these people would not be working in a sheltered shop and would not need an organization with funds and staff to do the research and writing—they would be doing it themselves.

In Collingwood's limited concept, one only listens to professionals and only reads what the professionals write. He himself proves that it is not enough to have read the professional literature, whatever that may be. Nor is it enough to be able to put down on paper, in the special professional formula, the page and/or section referred to in a document—as though it were some magical symbol. And there we have it. These terms—"document," "professional literature," "citation"—which appear so frequently in NAC communications of late, have become almost an incantation which NAC undoubtedly hopes will protect them from congressional probing and blind-organization prodding to become responsive to those they claim to serve. Is NAC really saying to clubs, fraternal organizations, and social groups, "Publish or perish?"

A true professional exhibits, along with knowledge and expertise, understanding and compassion. These qualities seem to be absent from the NAC staff, despite the exhibition of degrees and academic titles and admonitions to "document."]

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*New York, New York, November 9, 1973.*

DEAR MR. ROBINSON: My friend ——— and I both work in the sheltered shops at

the Jewish Guild for the Blind. We would like to make suggestions and comments on your standards on sheltered shops. Sheltered shops should not be accredited unless they pay at least the prevailing minimum wage. There isn't any first-aid station. There isn't any material from the Labor Department, regarding age discrimination, race, creed, et cetera. Also, no hour and time sheet is displayed. This material should be shown in Braille and print.

We would like to see material distributed concerning clients' rights, benefits, et cetera.

There are no employer-employee meetings. There was one, but there wasn't any advance announcement of it. We tried to make an appointment to see Mr. Malik, the director; other employees did too. We were all unsuccessful.

We recommend longer contracts for more work and less layoffs. Sheltered shops shouldn't be accredited if they do not have grievance committees for sheltered shops.

Sheltered shops shouldn't be accredited if they do not have the minimum wage, vacation with pay, disability insurance, eleven paid holidays, workmen's compensation, retirement benefits, thirteen paid sick days, unemployment insurance, and hospitalization.

Your on-site teams should make more frequent *unannounced* inspections, because the agencies are prepared for them if they don't.

We feel that your board meetings should be open to the blind because NAC affects us as consumers of services.

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We would appreciate your looking into the above matters. We are very interested in NAC and would like any material and information you could send us. We are very interested in NAC's programs and activities.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

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NATIONAL ACCREDITATION COUNCIL  
FOR AGENCIES SERVING THE BLIND  
AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED,  
*New York, New York, November 29, 1973.*

DEAR MISS ———: Mr. Robinson has asked me to acknowledge receipt of the recent letter from you and Miss ———.

In relation to NAC standards, we welcome your suggestions for improvement. A number of the items which you suggest be included in our standards, are, in fact, included in the COMSTAC Report with which I know Miss ——— is familiar. In those cases in which you feel the COMSTAC standards are lacking, it would be most helpful for you to cite the specific page and standard number. Citations of documentation in the professional literature about specific suggestions would be valuable.

If you happen to belong to an organization of blind persons, we urge you to suggest that the organization undertake a careful program of investigation and research, with a goal of publishing the results in the professional literature.

Concerning your comments about the minimum wage and posting of certain data by sheltered workshops, we suggest you write directly to the United States Labor Department for a listing of current requirements and standards.

Specific complaints which you raise about the Jewish Guild for the Blind in New York will be followed up and brought to the attention of our Commission on Accreditation.

Our board of directors has adopted a policy of openness and welcomes responsible input from consumers. You may be interested to know that eleven of the thirty-two members of our board are visually handicapped.

We hope this information will prove of interest to you.

Sincerely,

HUESTEN COLLINGWOOD,  
*Staff Associate,  
Commission on Accreditation.*

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## NAC: CONGRESS FIRES MORE ROUNDS

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
*Washington, D.C., October 23, 1973.*

Mr. ROBERT WHITEHEAD,  
*President, Kentucky Federation  
of the Blind,  
Louisville, Kentucky.*

DEAR MR. WHITEHEAD: I will join with the other members of the Kentucky delegation in opposing the National Accreditation Council's action. I do not believe the NAC serves the best purpose of the blind in our State of Kentucky.

When requests come up in the future for funds, this will place me in a position where I can go into detail concerning the reasons why funding should be refused.

With kindest regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,

WILLIAM H. NATCHER,  
*Member of Congress.*

[Congressman Natcher is a member of the House Appropriations Committee.]

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CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
*Washington, D.C., October 11, 1973.*

Mr. STEPHAN KURZMAN,  
*Assistant Secretary for Legislation,  
United States Department of Health,  
Education, and Welfare,  
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. KURZMAN: As you know from previous correspondence, I am

becoming increasingly concerned over the activities of a private organization, the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped, which is receiving Federal funding.

Initially, the situation was brought to my attention by a blind resident of Connecticut. Since then, representatives of the National Federation of the Blind have visited my Washington office to discuss the extent of these problems.

In Commissioner Reedy's letter of July 13, he stated that HEW was aware of the difficulties between NFB and NAC, but that "we are satisfied that we should do nothing more in this regard, and would urge that in the future the Federation work directly with NAC to resolve their differences."

Under normal circumstances, I would agree with this policy. However, it appears that this course of action will not solve the problem. One example of this should be sufficient. Recently, members of the NFB requested of the Board of NAC that two silent representatives be allowed to attend their annual meeting. NAC responded by saying no and by posting a guard at the door of their meeting. This attitude is certainly not conducive to resolving the differences of opinion as to the needs of our blind consumers.

There is particular concern over some of the institutes that have been accredited by NAC, including among the numbers the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind. This organization was alerted to my concern and

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requested documentation of the alleged abuses. I am enclosing a copy of this documentation for your information.

As you know, the basic thrust of the Administration's goals has been toward better utilization of Federal money so that it will best address our problems. The many communications, either verbal or written, which I have received suggest that, in this instance, such is not the case.

I am hopeful that HEW will reconsider its position that all has been done that can be done. The problem is now mushrooming, and I feel it would be much more expedient to resolve the differences now.

Further information will follow, but I respectfully request that attention to this problem begin as soon as possible.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

RONALD A. SARASIN,  
*Member of Congress.*

[Congressman Sarasin is a member of the House Committee on Education and Labor.]

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UNITED STATES SENATE,  
*Washington, D. C., November 9, 1973.*

Hon. CASPAR W. WEINBERGER,  
*Secretary,  
Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare,  
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: Over the past several years, the blind of my State have complained to me about some of the policies and practices of the National

Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped, an organization commonly referred to by the blind as NAC. I understand that your Department has designated NAC as the body to accredit agencies providing services to the blind.

In this regard, I have reviewed a considerable amount of correspondence between the National Accreditation Council, the National Federation of the Blind, and the Social and Rehabilitation Service of your Department. I have also discussed this matter with some of my blind constituents.

There seems to be some merit in their complaints. It also appears that some of the Social and Rehabilitation Service's staff members have not shown due diligence in seeking redress of the grievances which have been expressed by blind persons, not just those in my State, but throughout the Nation.

I am convinced that the blind are entitled to real consumer participation in the formulation of policies which vitally affect their lives. I think their request is quite reasonable—that one-third of the members of the National Accreditation Council (NAC) be selected by, and accountable to, organizations of the blind.

Blind persons selected by the National Accreditation Council who have come to represent only themselves is not good enough. The fact that there are some blind persons on the policy-making board does not fulfill the requirement of genuine consumer participation. Accountability to the consumer is the most important factor, and in my view, this aspiration should not be sloughed off.

Judging from review of the correspondence between staff members of the Social and Rehabilitation Service and Members of Congress, it appears the former have been evasive in replying to the questions put to them and have not been responsive to the requests for correction of the grievances. Accordingly, I would very much appreciate your looking into the matter and giving me assurance that the reasonable requests of these people will be granted. I have received a resolution which the blind of my State have adopted which sets forth their complaints and requests. I am sending you a copy of this resolution herewith.

I look forward to hearing from you.

With kindest regards,

Sincerely,

LOWELL WEICKER, Jr.,  
*United States Senator.*

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CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR,  
SELECT SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION,  
*Washington, D. C., November 5, 1973.*

The Honorable L. H. FOUNTAIN,  
*Washington, D. C.*

DEAR MR. FOUNTAIN: I have received a copy of the letter sent to you by Mrs.

Robert Staley, president of the National Federation of the Blind of North Carolina, concerning the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped. I, too, have been hearing from members of the Federation, both in Indiana and throughout the country, as they are most earnest in presenting their concerns about the Council.

I have not received satisfactory answers to questions put in correspondence to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and I believe a number of other Members feel the same way. Accordingly, I have requested that the General Accounting Office conduct a study of certain issues in the operation of the National Accreditation Council, to gather facts that will help us determine if Federal support of this group is warranted. I trust the results of the study will be useful to the Congress in our continuing struggle for the rights of blind Americans.

I appreciate the opportunity to respond to this letter, and I welcome any further inquiry you might have about our efforts on behalf of the blind.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

JOHN BRADEMÁS,  
*Chairman,*  
*Select Subcommittee on Education.*

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## NAC: THE BATTLE IN CALIFORNIA

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
*Washington, D.C., October 19, 1973.*

Mr. R. DONALD BROWN,  
*President, Orange County Chapter,  
National Federation of the Blind  
of California, Inc.,  
Anaheim, California.*

DEAR MR. BROWN: I have just received the enclosed response from Mr. James S. Dwight, Jr. I would like to pursue this matter further, but in order to do so, I need your reaction to specific points made by Mr. Dwight.

Looking forward to hearing from you, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

RICHARD T. HANNA,  
*Member of Congress.*

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,  
EDUCATION, AND WELFARE,  
SOCIAL AND REHABILITATION SERVICE,  
*Washington, D.C., October 9, 1973.*

Hon. RICHARD T. HANNA,  
*House of Representatives,  
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. HANNA: Thank you for your letter of September 5, regarding the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped (NAC).

Since the inception of NAC, the Social and Rehabilitation Service has been one of the sponsors of this effort to increase the quality of services to blind persons throughout the Nation. Including the current grant, our agency has provided financial assistance in the total amount of \$566,000 spread over the past five years, matched by an equal amount from other resources. Like other accrediting efforts in the field of education and health, required financial assistance through our agency will decrease until NAC is self-supporting through private resources and fees from membership and accreditation. The overall plan for an accrediting base for public and private agencies, rehabilitation facilities and schools serving blind persons began with the establishment of standards for the different phases of work for the blind.

Following the initial stages of development, an organization was officially established for the purpose of serving as the accrediting agency applying the standards previously mentioned. It should be emphasized that accreditation is a voluntary process. Detailed methods and procedures for self-evaluation, on-site review, and other pertinent information regarding accreditation procedures are contained in the brochure entitled "The Why/What/How of Accreditation in Services to the Blind and Visually Handicapped," copy enclosed. NAC is continually adding new facets to these methods and procedures.

In 1971, NAC became the first accrediting body in the field of special education to receive official recognition from the United States Commissioner of

Education and to be included in the Commissioner's listing of Nationally Recognized Accrediting Agencies. This decision was made following an exhaustive review of NAC's standards and methods. The fifty schools and agencies now accredited, headed by highly respected leaders in the field, provide services for at least eighty-five thousand blind children and adults.

Of the current thirty-two members on the NAC Board of Directors, eleven are blind. The remainder represent a wide variety of expertise in business, labor, education, ophthalmology, and other technical experience encompassing areas of knowledge which are essential for reviewing large multifaceted organizations.

A study of NAC was authorized last March by a team of experts chosen from outside of SRS which included representation from the National Federation of the Blind. We are enclosing the report of that site visit.

The Social and Rehabilitation Service will continue to monitor, through periodic site visits, the activities of NAC, as it does those of all grantees.

Yours very truly,

JAMES S. DWIGHT, Jr.,  
*Administrator.*

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*Anaheim, California, November 2, 1973.*

The Honorable RICHARD T. HANNA,  
*U. S. House of Representatives,  
Cypress, California.*

DEAR SIR: Thank you very much for your letter of October 19 in which you

request my reaction to specific points that are raised by Mr. James Dwight, the Administrator of the Social and Rehabilitation Service. I am pleased to have the opportunity to comment on Mr. Dwight's letter. I am enclosing a copy of a Resolution unanimously passed by the National Federation of the Blind of California at our spring convention that succinctly delineates our position on the National Accreditation Council.

[Mr. Dwight's] letter is a form letter that has been going out from his office over his signature for some time now and does not in any way answer the questions being raised by the National Federation of the Blind regarding the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped. This letter can only be characterized as a defense on the part of Mr. Dwight of NAC and, presumably, his own policy regarding the awarding of grants.

In the third paragraph of Mr. Dwight's letter he states, "It should be emphasized that accreditation is a voluntary process." I wish that that were an accurate reflection of reality, but it should be emphasized that NAC is working towards the day when agencies in work for the blind will not be able to receive Federal funding unless they have been accredited by NAC. A resolution was passed by the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation on September 26, 1972, stating that all agencies not accredited by NAC by June 30, 1976, will be ineligible for Federal funds. Certainly, Mr. Dwight is or should be aware of the goal of compulsory accreditation.

Also, in paragraph three, Mr. Dwight indicates that all is well with the NAC



accreditation process, and to prove his point he includes a pamphlet written, produced, and paid for by NAC. The whole thrust of the National Federation of the Blind argument is that all is not well with the accreditation process. The standards that are used to evaluate work for the blind are unresponsive to the needs of the blind, and there is no mechanism at present for participation by consumer organizations in the development of meaningful new standards because consumer organizations, like the National Federation of the Blind, are excluded from the NAC Board of Directors. Also in paragraph three, Mr. Dwight makes reference to the evaluation process. It is important to know that there is no procedure at present for the evaluation of client satisfaction or dissatisfaction or local-consumer-organization evaluation of services provided by agencies in work for the blind seeking NAC accreditation.

In paragraph two, Mr. Dwight states that the Social and Rehabilitation Service has financed NAC to the tune of \$566,000. However, I trust that Mr. Dwight is not implying that this is the sum total of Federal funds finding its way into the NAC treasury, because the self-evaluation and on-site inspection process that Mr. Dwight makes reference to in paragraph three costs the agency applying to NAC for accreditation several thousand dollars. What percentage of these funds are given to the applying agencies by SRS and intended for the rehabilitation of blind Americans?

In paragraph four, a paragraph whose tone can only be characterized as soaring praise of NAC, it is stated that, "The fifty schools and agencies now accredited, headed by highly respected leaders in the field, provide services for at least

eighty-five thousand blind children and adults." While Mr. Dwight finds these leaders of agencies and schools for the blind highly respected, the blind of the Nation find these agencies to be among the poorest in quality of service to blind children and adults. For example, the Iowa School for the Blind is accredited by NAC but the quality of its education program is so poor that it is unable to meet the accreditation standards established by the Iowa Education Accreditation Association. Consequently, while Mr. Dwight congratulates the leaders of the Iowa School for the Blind, the children of that institution are receiving an inferior education that is disqualifying them for attendance in our Nation's best colleges and universities. Many of the fifty agencies that have been accredited by NAC are controlled by persons who are members of NAC's board of directors. I cite two specific cases: The Cleveland Society for the Blind has been accredited by NAC and a member of the society's board served as a member of the NAC Board of Directors. The poor quality of service delivered by the Cleveland Society for the Blind is evidenced by the fact that the blind vending-stand operators working under contract to the Cleveland Society for the Blind were moved to take that agency to court for illegally depriving them of over one million dollars in earned income while forcing the workers to sign contracts containing highly repressive and custodial sections—for example, the number of times a blind worker should bathe daily and the statement that blind workers should change their underwear regularly. Another example of the "highly respected leadership" that Mr. Dwight alludes to and the unsavory link between NAC and the agencies that have been accredited, is the Rhode Island Lighthouse for the Blind.

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Before his death the director of the Rhode Island Lighthouse for the Blind also served as a member of the Board of Directors of NAC. As evidence of the custodial and negative attitude towards blind people and about blindness that is held by the Rhode Island Lighthouse for the Blind, this workshop refers to its employees as patients and pays these blind workers forty cents an hour.

In the fifth paragraph, Mr. Dwight states, "Of the current thirty-two members on the NAC Board of Directors, eleven are blind." Mr. Dwight apparently would have you believe that these eleven blind board members constitute consumer participation in the policy-making decisions of NAC and presumably would meet the demand of the National Federation of the Blind for consumer representatives on NAC's board. Nothing could be further from the truth. These eleven blind people are not elected by the blind nor do they represent the blind. They either speak for themselves alone or they speak for the agencies for which they work. Also in paragraph five, Mr. Dwight states that "The remainder represent a wide variety of expertise in business, labor, education, ophthalmology, and other technical experience encompassing areas of knowledge which are essential for reviewing large multifaceted organizations." It is the position of the National Federation of the Blind that more important than or, at least, in addition to this variety of professional occupations and backgrounds represented on the NAC Board is an understanding of the nature of blindness and the social consequences of blindness which, unfortunately, these civic-minded individuals lack and consequently act as a rubber stamp for the policies of the professional staff of NAC.

In paragraph six, Mr. Dwight states that, "A study of NAC was authorized last March by a team of experts chosen from

outside of SRS which included representation from the National Federation of the Blind." This statement is blatantly false. The National Federation of the Blind did not have representation on this team of experts. Mr. Dwight is probably referring to Dr. Richard Wilson who did participate in the SRS review. However, Dr. Wilson is not a member of, or a representative of, or a spokesman for the National Federation of the Blind. Dr. Wilson did write a vigorous dissenting opinion entitled "NAC: Rationalization of Tokenism" and presented this opinion at the National Federation of the Blind Convention in New York City this past July. In Dr. Wilson's report, a copy of which I gave you during our last meeting in your office, he characterizes the team as anything but independent and points out that the majority report was written by employees of SRS.

In conclusion, I would like to add a comment about the general tone of Mr. Dwight's letter. I believe it is fair to say that this letter is a defense of NAC as it is presently constituted and currently functions. This I find alarming, because NAC by its low standards and move towards compulsory accreditation is now damaging the quality of services to blind citizens and, in my opinion, constitutes a dangerous threat to quality work with the blind for the future. If you agree with me, will you please consider joining many other Congressmen in the withholding of Federal appropriations to NAC until NAC reforms itself.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to comment on Mr. Dwight's letter to you. If I can be of any further assistance to you, please feel free to call upon me.

Sincerely,

R. DONALD BROWN,  
*President, Orange County Chapter, NFBC.*

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## CONNECTICUT MOVES FORWARD

BY

HOWARD E. MAY, JR.

The Connecticut Board of Education and Services for the Blind has a new Board of Directors, two of whom are Federationists. This is the climax of a struggle that has lasted almost two years, since the reorganization of the National Federation of the Blind of Connecticut in December 1971.

In February 1972 the NFB of Connecticut charged the Board of Education and Services for the Blind and the Department of Personnel Services with discrimination and collusion by denying blind persons the right to take the examinations for the position of rehabilitation counselor with the agency. The full story is related in *The Monitor* for July 1972. Though three of the blind applicants secured appeals from the decision of the Department of Personnel Services, they were denied the right to take the examinations on the grounds that they did not meet the specifications. We know now that the job specifications were written so as to exclude any blind applicants.

In March 1972, we invaded the "sacred" sanctuary of the Board of Directors of the agency to "open" their meetings to the public. We pleaded the "Right to Know" law of Connecticut, and were upheld by the ruling of the Attorney General of the State. Now the agency Director admits that we were within our rights to take such drastic steps. We continued to haunt the meetings of the Board of Directors, as silent observers; at times, the hostility was thick enough to cut with a dull knife.

However, the quality of the meetings improved under surveillance.

The Board of Directors of the Connecticut agency is composed of six persons appointed by the Governor for four-year terms, and a judge of the Supreme Court, and the Governor, or their designates. In July 1972, four of the positions came up for appointment. The old-timers had been reappointed term after term, so that their positions were like the conference table around which they sat. They deeply resented the intrusion of observers. On July 1, 1973, Governor Thomas Meskill filled three of the positions with new people, including Mrs. Shirley Lebowitz, first vice-president of the National Federation of the Blind of Connecticut, and a member of the Executive Committee of the national organization. The second new appointee was a sighted salesman who was just starting his own business. The third position was supposed to go to the Reverend Howard E. May, president of the NFB of Connecticut; that appointment did not come through until November 20, 1973. Obviously, there was opposition to his appointment from somewhere. We could guess where!

With the help of our able State legislator, Mrs. Jean Thornton, of Glastonbury, the appointment was finally cleared. Mrs. Thornton had been the major guide of our civil rights for the blind and physically disabled law, which passed the legislature last spring, and became effective October 1, 1973.

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Now, with a new Board of Directors, the ball has passed into our hands. Of the six appointees, four are blind. We believe the Governor wants action in the agency, and we are sure that he does not want any more unfavorable

publicity. Most of all, the agency bureaucracy must be humanized, and the paternalism abolished; the agency must be concerned with helping the blind find independence and dignity, and with treating them as people.

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## CEIP COMMITTEE PLEADS FOR GLASSES

BY

BILL COREY

Attention all local affiliates of the National Federation of the Blind: Your Cultural Exchange and International Program Committee urgently needs your help if it is to succeed in this effort to provide eyeglasses and sunglasses for the undeveloped countries throughout the world. After long and careful consideration, the CEIP Committee believes that the need for eyeglasses can best be met by each local affiliate launching a campaign in its local area to collect discarded, no-longer-needed eyeglasses and sunglasses. Requests for these eyeglasses and sunglasses are increasing steadily and the only way possible to meet these requests is through your help. All glasses collected should be individually wrapped and tightly packed in strong cartons and shipped to the following address: CARE, Pier 38, South 156-3, Philadelphia, Pa.

The CEIP Committee would appreciate learning by letter of the success of your collection of glasses in behalf of the needy overseas. Please do not send any glasses to the committee. Requests for sunglasses

have been received from several tropical areas and are especially needed to protect those whose eyes may be weakened by the intense rays of the sun.

Many organizations throughout the country are already collecting eyeglasses. However, in some cases the purpose of these collections is to earn money for the organizations. Gold and other metals are salvaged, and in many cases the lenses are discarded. We, on the other hand, through our collections, will be aiding the underprivileged overseas. The success of our campaign to collect eyeglasses and sunglasses depends on you. The CEIP Committee cannot meet this need alone, so we make this appeal for help to all affiliates of the NFB and we know that you will join us in this very worthy project. The CEIP Committee will be awaiting news of the success of all our local groups. Send all letters to William G. Corey, 215 Watson Boulevard, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15214.

The members of the CEIP Committee thank you for whatever assistance you may give in this worthwhile effort.

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**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND  
HOWARD BROWN RICKARD SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

**NATURE OF SCHOLARSHIP**

The Howard Brown Rickard Scholarship, administered by the National Federation of the Blind, is to be awarded each year to legally blind university students studying for a professional degree as specified below. Scholarships vary from year to year as to number and amount.

This scholarship was established by a bequest of Thomas E. Rickard in honor of his father, Howard Brown Rickard.

**WHO IS ELIGIBLE**

Any legally blind university student in the professions of **LAW, MEDICINE, ENGINEERING, ARCHITECTURE, AND THE NATURAL SCIENCES**, including undergraduates in these fields, is eligible to apply.

While anyone may apply for the award, in order to be considered he must:

(a) be sponsored by the state NFB affiliate where he is going to school or in the state where he makes his home, and if there be no such affiliate he must secure sponsorship in a manner deemed appropriate by the chairman of the scholarship committee.

(b) attend the NFB Convention at which the scholarship is to be awarded.

**HOW TO APPLY**

Fill out completely the attached application and mail it to the Reverend Howard May, Chairman, Rickard Scholarship Committee, RFD 1, West Willington, Connecticut 06279, by May 1, 1974.

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NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND  
HOWARD BROWN RICKARD SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Applicant's Full Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State and ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address (permanent) \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State and ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

High School Attended \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

College Now Attending \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Units Completed by End of Present Term \_\_\_\_\_

Colleges Previously Attended (Indicate the year you attended college and total number of units completed at each college):

\_\_\_\_\_ From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_ Units \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_ Units \_\_\_\_\_

Major Subject \_\_\_\_\_

List name and amount of any scholarships you have received or are receiving:

\_\_\_\_\_

Attach the following:

- (1) Transcripts from all colleges attended. (If you are entering college, attach high school transcript.)
- (2) A statement of 250 words of your reason for applying for this scholarship and how it will assist you to achieve a professional goal including, if you wish, information about your financial situation. Please include information about your visual acuity indicating whether you are partially or totally blind.
- (3) Recommendation of sponsoring NFB affiliate.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Make sure all spaces are filled in and mail application by **May 1, 1974**, to:

THE REVEREND HOWARD MAY, Chairman  
RICKARD SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE  
RFD # 1  
WEST WILLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06279



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND  
HOWARD BROWN RICKARD SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Applicant's Full Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street

City \_\_\_\_\_ State and ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address (permanent) \_\_\_\_\_  
Street

City \_\_\_\_\_ State and ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

High School Attended \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

College Now Attending \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Units Completed by End of Present Term \_\_\_\_\_

Colleges Previously Attended (Indicate the year you attended college and total number of units completed at each college):

\_\_\_\_\_ From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_ Units \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_ Units \_\_\_\_\_

Major Subject \_\_\_\_\_

List name and amount of any scholarships you have received or are receiving:

\_\_\_\_\_

Attach the following:

- (1) Transcripts from all colleges attended. (If you are entering college, attach high school transcript.)
- (2) A statement of 250 words of your reason for applying for this scholarship and how it will assist you to achieve a professional goal including, if you wish, information about your financial situation. Please include information about your visual acuity indicating whether you are partially or totally blind.
- (3) Recommendation of sponsoring NFB affiliate.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

\_\_\_\_\_ Signature

Make sure all spaces are filled in and mail application by **May 1, 1974**, to:

THE REVEREND HOWARD MAY, Chairman  
RICKARD SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE  
RFD # 1  
WEST WILLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06279



OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND THE BLIND:  
CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR,  
OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY  
AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION,  
*Washington, D.C., October 9, 1973.*

Mr. KENNETH JERNIGAN,  
*President, National Federation of the Blind,  
Des Moines, Iowa.*

DEAR MR. JERNIGAN: Your concern and the concern of other groups about employers using the Occupational Safety and Health Administration inspection as an excuse to keep from hiring the blind, is also our concern. The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, Public Law 95-596, was enacted with the sole purpose of providing safe and healthful working conditions for all employees. The act, and its enforcement, should not prevent any employer from hiring the blind. The Department of Labor has promoted the hiring of all persons, regardless of possible physical deficiencies, and will continue to do so.

OSHA standards (the regulations governing an employer's methods of operations to provide safe and healthful workplaces) may provide in some instances that "qualified persons" shall be employed on specific operations. Persons operating cranes, mobile equipment, et cetera, require the use of sight but many jobs can be, and are, performed safely by those who are blind.

It was the intent of Congress that the Occupational Safety and Health Act would be a help to all workers, including the blind and others who may have some

impairment. An employer who is complying with the standards should have no reticence in hiring workers with impairments if they are placed on jobs which they can perform.

Sincerely,

JOHN H. STENDER,  
*Assistant Secretary of Labor.*

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND,  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,  
*Des Moines, Iowa, October 29, 1973.*

Mr. JOHN H. STENDER,  
*Assistant Secretary of Labor,  
United States Department of Labor,  
Occupational Safety  
and Health Administration,  
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. STENDER: I have your letter of October 9, 1973, and I thank you for it. You are right, I am sure, when you say:

It was the intent of Congress that the Occupational Safety and Health Act would be a help to all workers, including the blind and others who may have some impairment.

However, you also say:

OSHA standards (the regulations governing an employer's methods of operations to provide safe and healthful workplaces) may provide in some instances that "qualified persons" shall be employed on specific operations. Persons operating cranes, mobile equipment, et cetera, require the use of sight but many jobs can be, and are, performed safely by those who are blind.

The problem comes when the employer (or, perhaps, the OSHA inspectors) begins to try to determine what "jobs can be, and are, performed safely by those who are blind." The easiest course is to "play it safe"—that is, when in doubt, don't. Many jobs can be performed quite efficiently and safely by blind persons, but the uninformed employer or government official may feel that it is "obvious" and "just a matter of common sense" that such is not the case.

Under the circumstances many employers are refusing to give qualified blind persons an opportunity on the grounds that OSHA standards are at fault. What can we do to alter this situation? It is becoming a major stumbling block in our path.

Very truly yours,

KENNETH JERNIGAN,  
President,  
*National Federation of the Blind.*

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### FOOD STAMPS FOR GUIDE DOGS

BY

E. S. FOSCUE

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND  
OF WASHINGTON,  
*Seattle, Washington, April 14, 1973.*

GOVERNOR DAN EVANS,  
*Legislative Building,  
Olympia, Washington.*

DEAR GOVERNOR EVANS: In the *Seattle Times* of Saturday, February 24, 1973, Ralph Munro said, "Under the present system the Governor is responsible, and individuals with complaints can seek him out." As we do not intend to bombard you with the various individual problems of the blind in this State, the National Federation of the Blind has continued to work toward the solution of these individual problems. Wherever possible, as in the problem below, we have tried to work with and through the State Services for the Blind.

Recently —, an almost totally blind mother of two children, had to seek public assistance and was given help through Aid

for Dependent Children totaling \$251 per month. At the same time she was put on the Food Stamp program and was permitted to buy \$92 worth of Food Stamps for \$36 per month. Since — uses a dog guide and as it is generally considered that Aid for the Blind can contribute to the care and feeding of a dog guide as well as basic costs for a telephone for a blind person, her social worker, —, requested Aid for the Blind totaling \$20.91 (\$14.45 for the dog and \$6.46 for the phone). This Aid for the Blind request was approved by State Services for the Blind and on or about the first of this month she received her first welfare check including the \$20.91 increase.

Unfortunately this raise in income increases the cost of her food stamps to \$56 per month instead of \$36 per month.

As you can readily see, when she uses the money to which she is entitled for the care of her dog and phone, she will, in effect, be taking \$20 worth of food out of her childrens' mouths.



I am personally seeing that she gets \$10 worth of dog food to help her with her immediate problem but sincerely hope that you will be able to arrange, or assist in arranging, some more satisfactory method of taking care of the needs of this blind mother.

For your information, — is requesting training assistance either in the field of reupholstery or flower arrangement; she is experienced at both. She is looking forward to the day when she can again "pay her own way."

Sincerely yours,

EDWARD S. FOSCUE,  
*Welfare Chairman.*

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
*Washington, D.C., October 31, 1973.*

Mr. EDWARD S. FOSCUE,  
*Welfare Chairman,*  
*National Federation of the Blind*  
*of Washington,*  
*Seattle, Washington.*

DEAR MR. FOSCUE: This is in further response to our correspondence of several months ago concerning —.

I am most pleased to forward the enclosed communication from the USDA Food and Nutrition Service regarding a clarification of policy concerning seeing-eye dogs and allowable medical deductions under the Food Stamp program.

Again, thank you for bringing this matter to my attention. With the indicated clarification, similar problems may be avoided in the future.

Sincerely yours,

FLOYD V. HICKS,  
*Member of Congress.*

Encl.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,  
FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE,  
*Washington, D.C., October 28, 1973.*

Hon. FLOYD V. HICKS,  
*House of Representatives.*

DEAR MR. HICKS: A report from the Washington Department of Social and Health Services has been received in regard to the food-stamp case of the — household. As you may recall, a public assistance payment granted to — for the support of her seeing-eye dog resulted in an increase in the household's food-stamp purchase price when the public-assistance payment was counted as income and not deducted as a medical expense in computing food-stamp income. It was the conclusion of the State agency that the household was properly certified for stamps.

After reviewing the report in our office, we felt that the State agency had interpreted Food and Nutrition Service Instructions too rigidly. Although expenses of owning a seeing-eye dog are not specifically mentioned as being a medical deduction, it is reasonable to consider the dog to be analogous to a prosthetic device, as the animal is used as an aid to overcome

a physical handicap. Therefore, the costs incurred through ownership and use of a seeing-eye dog by blind recipients may be considered a legitimate medical deduction. All state agencies are being advised of the policy clarification in this matter. Mrs. ——— should contact the local office in her area in order to assure that the appropriate adjustments in her food-stamp purchase price are made.

Thank you for bringing this matter to our attention. If we can be of further assistance, please let us know.

Sincerely,

MARY JANE FISKE,  
*Assistant to the Administrator.*

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## BLIND "CONTRIBUTE" TO GOVERNOR MANDEL'S CAMPAIGN

### MANDEL SOUGHT \$500 FROM BLIND

BY

BARRY C. RASCOVAR

[Reprinted with permission of the *Baltimore Morning Sun*, November 3, 1973.]

Governor Mandel's deputy patronage aide personally solicited five hundred dollars from the Maryland Workshop for the Blind to help pay for Mr. Mandel's re-election campaign.

It was the first time the nonprofit group had been asked to give to a political campaign.

The workshop operates eighty-five snack stands in state, city and Federal office buildings—including one in the State House in Annapolis—run by partially sighted adults.

It received nearly one million dollars from Mr. Mandel in his budget this year. Additionally, nine of the workshop's eleven trustees are appointed by the Governor.

The solicitation made last spring by Michael S. Silver of the Governor's staff, was not viewed as a threat of possible fund cutbacks, the group's executive director said yesterday.

"I didn't see it as improper," said George H. Park, the executive director of the Workshop for the Blind.

Mr. Mandel agreed. At his Thursday press conference, he said he "can't see anything wrong" in accepting money from the nonprofit group.

Mr. Park conceded that Mr. Silver's request for the political contribution from the Workshop for the Blind was a first.

He said the Governor's patronage aide telephoned him and asked, "if we could in some way support this [fundraising] dinner. He suggested we buy five tickets and I told him I'd see what we could do."

The Mandel dinner in May grossed \$917,000 for the Governor's political ticket more than a year before the 1974 elections.

Mr. Mandel said on Thursday that he had "no intention" of returning the money to the workshop. "I don't know anything about the Workshop for the Blind contributing," the Governor said, "but if they did I can't see anything wrong in it."

To meet the five hundred dollar request from the Governor's office, Mr. Park said he and four other individuals chipped in \$100 each for tickets to the Mandel Four-Star Salute dinner.

The money from these five individuals was paid to the workshop which in turn purchased the political tickets.

In addition to Mr. Park, those who helped pay for the tickets bought by the Workshop for the Blind were W. V. Crider, Jr., the groups's controller; John H. Mudd, the chairman of the workshop's trustees; William B. Kelly, who is the workshop's

insurance representative; and William T. Snyder, who acts as a public-relations consultant for the workshop.

"This is the only time we've ever done something like this," Mr. Park said.

"We didn't take it as [a] threat. It was a means of helping out Silver for the cooperation we have received from the Governor's office. He apparently had a lot of tickets to sell. I never looked at it as being anything political," he said.

Mr. Mudd said "there was absolutely no pressure" on him to help pay for the workshop's political contribution. "It was just a voluntary thing. We're not living in a vacuum, you know."

Mr. Kelly said he had "not contributed anything" to the Governor's fund-raiser. Mr. Park, though, said he had records showing that Mr. Kelly had contributed one hundred dollars to the workshop that went toward the purchase of the Mandel political tickets.

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#### MANDEL DENIES BLIND REQUEST

BY

BRUCE F. FREED

[Reprinted with permission from the *Baltimore Evening Sun*, November 8, 1973.]

ANNAPOLIS.—Governor Mandel denied today that any of his aides had solicited a five-hundred-dollar contribution from the Maryland Workshop for the Blind to his campaign fund-raiser last May, but promised that the money would be returned.

The Governor said at his morning news conference that Michael S. Silver, his deputy patronage aide, "was taking an unfair beating from the press" over the contribution.

He labeled as "completely untrue" the statement last week by George H. Park, the workshop's executive director, that Mr. Silver had asked him in the early spring to

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support the Four-Star Salute by purchasing five hundred dollars worth of tickets.

According to the Governor's version the "true facts" are that "the five individuals (the workshop's trustees) made contributions. They gave to the workshop, which then made out the check we then received."

Reached for comment after Mr. Mandel's news conference, Mr. Park refused to deny that Mr. Silver had contacted him for the contribution. "I won't comment on the statement I made last week on the contribution," Mr. Park replied when he was specifically asked to deny Mr. Silver's role.

Although Mr. Park acknowledged that "I have been told not to talk about the contribution," he said, "this thing has been grossly exaggerated. We worked this thing through Mr. Silver. There's nobody to blame but me."

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[Note.—Mr. Rascovar points out, in a later article, that an Internal Revenue official indicated that the Maryland Workshop may have jeopardized its tax-exempt status as a non-profit organization by making a contribution to a political campaign.]

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#### NFB TESTIFIES ON VENDING STAND ACT AMENDMENTS

[Editor's Note.—Hearings were held on the Vending Stand Act Amendments of 1973 in the closing weeks of the First Session of the 93d Congress. John Taylor appeared before the Senate Subcommittee on the Handicapped to testify on behalf of the NFB.]

*Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee:*

My name is John Taylor, and I appear today to present the views and concerns of the National Federation of the Blind, a nationwide organization of blind men and women. The National Federation is composed of blind persons from all walks of life. It is made up of local community chapters which are, in turn, united into statewide organizations of the blind. These statewide organizations are united in the National Federation of the Blind. We have been in existence since 1940, and we have a strong consumer orientation. Our

organization frequently has been on the cutting edge of change with respect to programs, services, attitudes, and opportunities related to blindness. In addition to our widespread educational programs designed to acquaint the general public with new concepts regarding blindness, we have for many years worked in conjunction with our affiliates to secure the rights and establish new opportunities for blind persons through judicial processes. Significant amounts of our resources are applied regularly toward these efforts and with very substantial success.

In Florida our efforts were successful in terminating a program to require vending-stand operators to contribute a significant portion of their income to a Federal-employee association. Litigation is in process now in Ohio to correct abuses in the administration of a portion of that State's vending program by a nominee

agency. In a variety of other instances through local affiliates, we have assisted the judicial process and participated in other hearings to establish and clarify the rights of blind vending-stand operators who were aggrieved by actions of a state licensing agency or a Federal department or agency.

Mr. Chairman, the National Federation of the Blind supported the Randolph-Sheppard amendments contained in S. 2461, and again we supported the amendments to the act represented in S. 2506. It is with appreciation and hope that we appear here today in support of S. 2581, "A bill to amend the Randolph-Sheppard Act for the blind to provide for a strengthening of the program authorized thereunder, and for other purposes." In 1956, the twentieth anniversary of the Randolph-Sheppard Act, our organization presented its Distinguished Service Award to the Honorable Jennings Randolph in recognition of the major contributions made by that act to the enhancement of employment opportunities for the blind. Although the Randolph-Sheppard Act has provided a major source of improvement and self-sufficiency for blind men and women, its purpose and intent have been eroded by Federal departments and agencies who have seen blindness as a terrible tragedy from which there can be no recovery, rather than as a visual loss which, with the right kind of training and opportunity, need not prevent competitive performance in a wide range of occupations and professions. Federal departments and agencies have gone so far as to say with regard to hot coffee and hot chocolate that blind persons may not make them, may not serve them, and may not handle the utensils used in connection therewith. To a gradually increased extent, the Randolph-Sheppard vending-stand program for the

blind on Federal property has been curtailed by bureaucratic attitudes toward blindness rather than by any characteristics inherent in blindness itself. The philosophy and thrust of S. 2581 represent an important and positive step forward rather than a continuation of the doubt, diminution, and defeatism which characterize so many of the attitudes prevailing today.

In addition to the detrimental attitudes toward blindness which all too frequently find expression in the rules, regulations, and policies of Federal departments and agencies, blind operators of vending stands are also confronted with an erosion of the program which provides hope and opportunity by a General Services Administration which proposes regulations to reduce the kinds of articles they can sell in Government buildings. The blind operators find competition from Federal-employee welfare and recreation associations which operate their own vending machines. They find other department and agency heads who are unwilling to consider blind-vendor sites at their installations. They find the implementation of an Executive Order which results in the placement of a minority business enterprise in competition with a blind vendor on the same Federal property.

Mr. Chairman, the Randolph-Sheppard Act has been on the statute books now for more than thirty-three years. It was last amended in 1954, and the time is at hand for the act to be updated, strengthened, expanded, and given a stronger positive thrust. S. 2581 seeks to accomplish these objectives.

Since statistical and other data regarding the program under the Randolph-Sheppard



Act are readily available for the record from other sources, I shall not include that information here. Suffice it to say that the Randolph-Sheppard Act for the blind as it operates on Federal property has ceased to be creative, to grow, and to hold the hope it once promised. The growth which is occurring in the vending-stand program under the act is occurring on non-Federal public property and in the private sector where the restrictive philosophy of the Federal departments does not stifle opportunity and hope.

If enacted, S. 2581 will establish a priority for blind persons to operate vending facilities on Federal property; expand the definition of a vending stand; and enlarge the list of articles to be sold. These three changes hold promise of program growth and the opportunity for hundreds of new jobs. The assignment to blind vending-facility operators of income from vending machines on Federal property represents another major opportunity to expand the program and dramatically increase employment among blind persons. Moreover, adoption of this provision will result in removal of a major vested interest stifling the program.

Section 3(2) of the bill will contribute materially to expansion of the program by requiring publication in the *Federal Register* of the reason for disapproval of vending-facility permits when the basis for the denial is that approval would "adversely affect the interests of the United States." The public-disclosure provision in this paragraph is critical to changing current administrative practice.

The use of "set-aside" funds authorized under the act has long been a source of major concern to blind persons. In some

states, the set-aside percentages are so high that they stifle initiative and are virtually confiscatory. Among the states there exists wide disparity in the assessment of set-aside charges and in the use of set-aside monies. Section 5(3)b of the Bill makes provision for a fifth use of set-aside funds for "retirement or pension funds, health insurance contributions, and provision for paid sick leave and vacation time, if it is determined by a majority vote of operators licensed by such State agency that funds under this paragraph shall be set aside for such purposes." If this provision were adopted without other changes in the use of set-aside funds, it would seriously cripple the program by further curtailing the earnings of operators without commensurate benefits to them. It should be noted here that money for the purposes indicated would be coming from the vending-stand operators themselves. In the case of payment of social-security retirement, for example, it would result in substantially increased payments for blind operators without any increase in benefits. A major issue in the vending-stand program today is the extent to which funds are already being set aside from the proceeds of vending-stand operations. It is essential that excessive double taxation be at least curtailed.

Section 7 of the bill before you today provides for a badly-needed arbitration procedure to resolve disputes between vending-facility managers and state licensing agencies and between state licensing agencies and Federal departments, agencies, and instrumentalities. The fair hearings currently in operation within state licensing agencies are vague, often unknown, and lack both accessibility and visibility. Blind vending-facility managers have little faith in these hearing procedures

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as they are presently constituted. Although the efforts of this committee resulted several years ago in the establishment of appeals machinery by most Federal departments and agencies to resolve disputes between state licensing agencies and themselves, these procedures made the Federal department or agency both judge and jury. The arbitration provision contained in section 7 represents a major step toward strengthening the program, as well as public disclosure of facts regarding its operation and administration.

We concur with the spirit embodied in section 9 of the bill regarding the need for personnel to strengthen and expand the vending-facility program. It is important to note here that the mere addition of personnel will not fully achieve the desired goals. The new personnel must be personally imbued with a positive attitude toward blindness and be thoroughly knowledgeable regarding the specialized skills and techniques utilized by blind persons to do, without sight, a wide range of tasks for which sight is used by those who possess it.

The vending-facility program for the blind, properly developed, not only affords a major area of employment; it also represents an affirmative-action program on the part of government and one which demonstrates daily the wide range of competence possessed by our Nation's blind citizens.

In summary, the issue before this Subcommittee, the Congress, the American people, the executive branch of Government, and Federal-employee groups and associations, is jobs for blind people who do not now have them. The issue is hundreds, even thousands, of jobs for blind people who need them and want them, and can, with training, discharge the duties which they entail. Although substantial amounts of money are presently being diverted from activities which could be employing blind persons, the amount so diverted is not consequential in the life of each member of an employee committee or association.

The gains, the opportunities which can result from passage of S. 2581 are substantial and sorely needed. The goal of thousands of additional vending stands and thousands more blind people employed is before us. We believe achievement of this goal overrides any other peripheral questions raised against strengthening and expanding the Randolph-Sheppard vending-facility program for the blind.

Finally, it is apparent from years of experience that Federal departments and agencies lack sufficient imagination to stimulate and encourage development of a truly creative vending-facility program. Strong departmental and, especially, congressional oversight will be needed to accomplish the objectives which the bill seeks to achieve.

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## THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973—EDITORIAL COMMENT

BY

E. B. WHITTEN

[Editor's Note.—Reprinted by courtesy of the author, who is the executive director of the National Rehabilitation Association. We hope that Mr. Whitten will not mind if his kind words to the Editor are shared. He wrote in part: "I read *The Monitor* regularly, and I am impressed with the thoroughness with which you cover news of significance to the blind. I have told many people that this is the principal source of my information having to do with problems affecting the blind, and I would not want to be without *The Monitor*."]

In the *Legislative Newsletter*, volume 15, number 3, we analyzed P.L. 93-112, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as objectively as we could. We shall, now, make some comments that express the viewpoints of the writer with respect to the significance of the legislation. In making such comments, he is governed by statements made in the reports of the two committees as they developed their respective versions of the legislation, the wording of the conference report, and his conferences with committee members and staff and RSA officials.

**Federal administration of vocational rehabilitation**

Congress and the Administration have had problems for years with respect to the administration of certain HEW programs. In general, recent Administrations have tended to weaken the bureaus, as they built up the superstructures, such as the Social and Rehabilitation Service, while Congress has wanted the bureaus strengthened and

has been openly antagonistic to efforts of the various Secretaries to establish intermediaries between the bureaus and the Secretary's own Office. This conflict resulted in legislation several years ago that established the Bureau of Services for the Handicapped in the Office of Education and concentrated services for handicapped children in that bureau. A recent proposal by the Administration to place an organizational structure between the Bureau of Services for the Handicapped and the Commissioner of Education is being challenged by Congress at this time. Recently, congressional action resulted in taking the Administration on Aging out of the Social and Rehabilitation Service and putting it in the Office of an Assistant Secretary for Human Development. There have been similar problems with respect to programs of services for children.

As Congress worked on the vocation-rehabilitation legislation, it appeared to many Members that the Administration was attempting to downgrade the Rehabilitation Services Administration in the Department. There was much evidence of this. SRS, the superstructure, was building up staff, while the Rehabilitation Services Administration staff shrunk. Rehabilitation research programs were administered at the SRS level. Although RSA had a small training unit, most of the personnel having to do with training was concentrated in SRS. The problem, if anything, appeared to be more acute at the regional level than at the national level, as RSA personnel had to report through the SRS mechanisms rather than directly to the

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Rehabilitation Services Administration. Administrators of state rehabilitation agencies were disturbed by the divided responsibility between the two levels. Undoubtedly, RSA employees, likewise, were disenchanted with the trend of events. Congress seemed determined to do something about this, and all versions of the legislation have contained provisions of one kind or another to strengthen the Rehabilitation Services Administration in the Department. Such provisions were stated to be one of the reasons why the President vetoed the previous two bills.

The final result in the new legislation is interesting. It establishes the Rehabilitation Services Administration in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, the first time there has been a legally constituted Rehabilitation Services Administration. The Administration is to be headed by a Commissioner who will be appointed by the President. The legislation does not specify that the individual appointed must be confirmed by the Senate, which would have made Congress a partner to the appointment. Therefore, this is interpreted to mean that Congress thinks that the office will have more prestige, and it will be more difficult for it to be manipulated by the Secretary of HEW, if the Commissioner is a Presidential appointee.

The legislation specifies that regulations pursuant to the act shall be promulgated by the Secretary through the Commissioner. The Secretary is given authority, also, to delegate to any officer or employee of the United States his powers and duties under the act, except as otherwise provided in the act. The act, however, gives the Commissioner authority to administer title I (state-Federal program), title II (research and training), and title III (special projects,

et cetera). The act specifies, also, that the Secretary shall not approve any delegation of the functions of the Commissioner to any other officer not directly responsible to the Commissioner, unless the Secretary first submits a plan for such delegation to the Congress. Such delegation will be effective at the end of sixty days of continuous session of the Congress after the date of its transmission. Within the first thirty days, the Secretary must consult with the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare of the Senate and the Committee on Education and Labor of the House of Representatives respecting such proposed delegation. It seems to be inferred that Congress will do something about the delegation, if it doesn't like it, but this is not specified.

The language of the act relating to the administration leaves many unanswered questions. Undoubtedly, Congress was trying to take RSA out of the Social and Rehabilitation Service. Will the Secretary interpret the legislation in this way? What will be the relationship of the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration to the Administrator of the Social and Rehabilitation Service, if any? We sincerely hope that these issues can be cleared up quickly, for administrative confusion can result in serious delays in the implementation of programs.

#### **Those with the most severe handicaps**

From the beginning, members of the House and Senate committees developed a feeling that state rehabilitation agencies did not always provide services to handicapped individuals who needed their services most. The "numbers" game was referred to by a number of witnesses. There were

statements that the state rehabilitation agencies were "creaming" the easy cases. In the absence of any objective criteria for measuring the degree of handicap, it was most difficult for committee members to determine just what the facts are. Committee members understood that a reasonable expectation of employment was a criterion for acceptance of an individual for service, and that the state agencies, therefore, could not accept every individual who applied for or was referred for service. They could understand the temptation, on the other hand, with pressure being exerted from the Federal Government and from state offices, for counselors to accept easy cases, or at least a certain number of easy cases, in efforts to make some kind of quota, real or imagined. It became evident in the first discussions of the writer with staff of the House committee that something was going to be done to try to see that the state agencies serve those who need the services most. The House committee finally decided that the best way to go about solving the problem was to establish a new title for services to individuals for whom there might not be a reasonable expectation of employability at the time of their acceptance. This was to be a separately financed program, so that expenditures under this program could not eat up vocational-rehabilitation funds. Severe disability, then, was to be defined more or less in terms of whether a handicapped person seemed to be employable or not employable. The House also decided to require that states in their regular caseloads should serve first those individuals who were the most severely disabled.

The Senate worked long and hard on this issue. Finally, it came up with a separate title, also, and a definition of severe

disability, the criteria for which were cost and duration of services. A compromise between these two positions was found in the two bills vetoed by the President.

The separate title for the severely handicapped was omitted in the final legislation. The legislation, however, requires state agencies to serve first individuals "with the most severe handicaps." Severe handicap is defined as meaning "multiple disabilities which result in costly services over an extended period of time" and there follows a long list of various classifications of the disabled who might fall into this category. The Secretary is given the authority to define further "severe handicap" in the regulations, and this is probably the most difficult task in developing these regulations. The emphasis on individuals with the most severe handicaps is found throughout the legislation: the statement of purpose, program priorities, research and training, and special projects.

Although they want the state agencies to serve the most severely disabled people, both House and Senate were uneasy for fear that some language in the bill would result in the rehabilitation agencies serving fewer individuals who could be made employable, while they were working with large numbers of people who might never be employable. Accordingly, in the conference report, the conferees make it clear that it is not their intention that the Rehabilitation Services Administration or any state rehabilitation agency discontinue or refuse services to any handicapped individual because of the type of his disability. The conferees stress that the provisions governing eligibility for services in the basic program are intended to *emphasize* services for individuals who have

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severe physical or mental disabilities and that persons with social disadvantages or handicaps are not by virtue thereof made eligible for services under this program. *Only those who may be expected to benefit in terms of employability are to receive rehabilitation services.*

Just how HEW will develop the regulations so as to assure this special emphasis on individuals with the more severe handicaps is not known. Undoubtedly, eventually, there must be some way to classify disabled people with respect to the degree of their handicaps. It is clear that Congress does not intend rehabilitation money to be used to serve individuals whose only handicaps are what might be referred to as social. Although previous law has always required that an individual have a physical or mental disability certified by a psychologist or a physician, a feeling existed in the Congress that state agencies were leaning over backward to serve "disadvantaged" individuals, principally public-assistance recipients, to the neglect of physically and mentally impaired individuals. These kinds of distinctions cause great difficulty. It is not unlikely that the term "behavioral disorders" as a classification of disability will be deleted from the regulations.

### Research and training

Throughout the development of the legislation, there was much concern for the effectiveness of research and training programs. The rehabilitation constituency appeared to be very unhappy about what had happened to research and demonstration and training in recent years. As already indicated, research and demonstration had been taken away from the Rehabilitation Services Administration

to be administered by SRS. The rehabilitation research funds were combined with social-service- and aging-research funds, and there has been much confusion with respect to what the rehabilitation research money was being used for. In addition, the Administration had expressed its intention to phase out the Federal support of the popular training programs for rehabilitation personnel. Accordingly, the Administration was much suspect in anything it said about research and training.

The end result was that research and training was separated out of other titles of the act and put in a title by itself. This is expected to give greater visibility to the research-and-training programs, and, presumably, make it easier for the constituencies to develop grassroots support for appropriations for research and training. Also, by specifying that the Secretary cannot delegate authority to administer the research-and-training programs to anyone except the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration, it is thought that research-and-training programs will be kept closer to the needs of handicapped individuals, as these needs are seen by those who work most closely with handicapped people. Five research programs are given special emphasis in the legislation: research-and-training centers, engineering-research centers, spinal-cord-injury research, renal-disease research, and international research.

As indicated in the analysis, there is overlapping authority between the research-and-training title and the special-projects section authorized in the title bearing the name "Special Responsibilities of the Secretary." It must be assumed that

most of the money appropriated during the next few years under the research-and-training title will be spent on the five categories of research that are listed in the research section of this title. Likewise, it will be assumed that programs conducted under the "special projects" provision of title III may be heavy in their demonstration emphasis and accommodate needs that cannot be financed under the principal categories to which the research section is applied.

With respect to training, there is little difference in the authority carried in the new act from that in previous legislation. It is interesting that the Administration, although proposing to phase out Federal support of training, made no effort to get the Rehabilitation Act amended to take out the authority to support such training. It is fairly evident, also, that Congress is not going along with the Administration's recommendations for a phase-out. If Congress continues to appropriate the money, it will be interesting to see whether the Administration will willingly spend the funds that are appropriated, or whether it will impound such funds, a practice that has been followed in some programs. There continues to be authority for both short-term and long-term training.

### **Rehabilitation facilities**

The Administration has been trying to phase out Federal support of rehabilitation-facility construction, just as it has construction in other fields. Again, it is interesting that the Administration did not propose legislation that would take away the authority to construct and staff rehabilitation facilities. Congress, undoubtedly, feels that rehabilitation facilities have an important role to play in

rehabilitation. It may have some misgivings about workshops, which resulted in the mandated study of workshops for handicapped individuals, but it wants rehabilitation facilities supported. The final legislation makes very minor changes in the legal basis for the support of rehabilitation facilities, except that the law carries no specific appropriation authority. Authority to construct and initially staff, and authority to finance, training services and rehabilitation-facility improvements are continued in the new legislation. In addition, there is a new program of mortgage insurance. In the absence of interest subsidies, it is not clear how much use the rehabilitation facilities will find for this new program.

### **The consumer**

An important aspect of the new legislation is emphasis upon the role and rights of consumers of services in policy development and implementation. State plans must contain provisions outlining how these agencies will assure the input of viewpoints of handicapped individuals in the decision-making processes. There is a careful elaboration of the relationship between the counselor and the client in developing and carrying out the individual's rehabilitation plan. Special "client assistance" projects are authorized. These projects are to emphasize an advocacy role, and, although administered by the state vocational-rehabilitation agency, are not to be a part of its basic organizational structure. Preference is given to handicapped individuals in employment in the Office of the Handicapped to be established under an Assistant Secretary of HEW. Federal contractors are required to have affirmative-action plans for the employment of handicapped individuals,

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and nondiscrimination against the handicapped under Federal grants is specified.

State vocational-rehabilitation agencies and rehabilitation facilities have developed formal relationships with consumer groups to varying degrees. It is evident that there will be more of this. Hopefully, these relationships will be developed in good faith on both sides and used constructively to improve services to handicapped individuals. The legislation provides a legal base for such activity without mandating harsh requirements which would be difficult to administer.

#### **Office for the Handicapped**

The idea of an Office for the Handicapped in the Secretary's Office had its origin in the Senate. Applicable to all HEW programs for the handicapped, the idea was promoted principally by handicapped individuals and their representatives. Although the legislation does not make the establishment of such an Office mandatory, it is understood that the Secretary of HEW agreed in advance to establish such an Office under an Assistant Secretary. The Office has no rule-making, administrative, or budgetary authority, as related to the on-going programs administered by the bureaus. Its principal administrative responsibility is to operate a clearing house of information useful to handicapped individuals and people serving handicapped individuals. Presumably, it will concentrate upon the identification of need, coordination of efforts, and advising the Secretary with respect to relevant concerns.

Although there have been various advisory committees in the past, this is the

first time an Office of this kind has been mandated in law. If allowed to operate as envisioned by Congress, it may prove to be an effective instrument serving the needs of handicapped individuals themselves and bureaus that operate the various programs. On the other hand, unwisely administered, it might become a nuisance and an obstacle. Congress has attempted to apply the safeguards which will assure that its efforts will be constructive.

#### **Architectural and transportation barriers**

In the original legislation, NRA proposed the establishment of a National Commission on Architectural and Transportation Barriers. This Commission was to operate for a limited time and have the kind of authority that is generally given to such commissions, i.e., to conduct hearings, make investigations, and develop recommendations for submission to legislative and executive branches of the Government. On the Senate side, there was substituted for this provision other provisions which would establish an Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board, the chief functions of which would be to see that existing laws are enforced. In the conference, it was agreed to include both concepts in the final legislation. We find, therefore, the Compliance Board charged both with the responsibility to see that present laws are obeyed and that studies and investigations are undertaken to more clearly ascertain needs and remedies. We think this legislation has great promise.

#### **A general look at the legislation**

For a long time, rehabilitation programs have had the strongest legislative base of

any comparable human-service programs. The definitions of the handicapped individual have been liberal, and the scope of services authorized has been broad. It was not necessary, therefore, to seek in this legislation greatly expanded concepts as relate to provision of vocational-rehabilitation services to employable handicapped individuals. There has been, however, no authorization of services to individuals who may not reasonably be expected to become employable. Provisions of services to this class of individuals, found in the two bills vetoed by the President, were omitted in the final legislation. The legislation does, however, provide for a comprehensive study, including research and demonstration, in an effort to find out more about the needs of this class of handicapped people and how they can be met. In the end, this may be one of the most significant new aspects of the legislation.

The emphasis upon individuals with severe handicaps will eventually have a considerable impact upon the programs. The passage of this legislation is almost sure to result in research aimed at more precise definitions of disability based upon functional limitations, which appears to be the only way that one may actually measure whether one handicap is more severe than another handicap. If more and more individuals with more severe handicaps are going to be served, it is going to be extremely important that development of technology to support rehabilitation services proceeds promptly and purposefully.

All in all, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is good legislation. Progress under the legislation will depend, in the main, upon the spirit in which it is administered and how well it is funded. Looking out after this will be a job for all of us.

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## THE STUDENT DIVISIONS KEEP MARCHING ON

BY

MARY HARTLE

One of the purposes which student divisions serve is to train leaders for the NFB. In an effort to provide this training and experience to more students, the student divisions in the states of Minnesota and Ohio held their elections in recent months.

In August, the NFB of Minnesota Student Division elected Mary Hartle president; Bonnie O'Day first vice-president; Nadine Jacobson second vice-president; Priscilla Dipple secretary; and Eric Smith was re-elected treasurer.

The NFB of Ohio Student Division voted into office the following people in October: Mary Ellen Reihing, president; Amy Gorn, vice-president; Colleen Spain, who returned to her post as secretary; and Joel Mariotti, treasurer. Larry Liston is continuing his leadership as a board member along with Randy Knapp and Julie Tillman. Mary Ellen Reihing is a senior at Bowling Green State University, majoring in psychology. Mary Hartle, also a senior, is attending Macalester College and is working toward a degree in political science.

Ohio students continue to play their part in the battle against NAC by passing resolutions coordinating NAC-tracking expeditions. A report outlining services available to college students is in the works and should be ready for distribution in January. A case of discrimination has been successfully resolved in which a blind student was refused admittance to a chemistry class at Kent State University. Kent State will hold an "awareness" day with the NFB providing literature. A newsletter is also published to keep students abreast of activities of concern to them.

A top priority for students in Minnesota is involving more students from across the entire State. This is being accomplished by aiding the organizing committee in

recruiting new members and by holding meetings in different locations. The student division is involved in setting up a training seminar for University of Minnesota Civil Service interviewers, to be held in January. Communication between monthly meetings is maintained through a newsletter. Ways are being sought to inform blind Minnesotans of the rehabilitation services they are entitled to.

It is clear that the student divisions in Ohio and Minnesota are working hard to spread Federationism, recruit new NFB members, and train new leaders. The organized blind movement will surely continue to progress in the years ahead with student divisions like these on the barricades.

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### MISSISSIPPI CONVENTION

BY

E. U. PARKER

The second annual convention of the NFB of Mississippi was held in Jackson, Mississippi, on December 1, 1973. On the evening of November 30, the Jackson Chapter held a get-acquainted party in honor of President and Mrs. Kenneth Jernigan. The people present filled the Gold Room of the hotel and, in addition to Jackson members, included Federationists from over the State and three from Alabama. The other guests included legislators, other State officials, and friends of Federationists.

In the Saturday afternoon session Congressman Thad Cochran made a very interesting talk on legislation and assured us of his continued assistance. He

specifically agreed to help get moving the General Accounting Office (GAO) investigation of NAC—which we learned later in Washington he had done. Herman White, head of the Office of Special Education of the Mississippi Department of Education, told what his office had done and what they plan to do toward assisting with the education of blind children in Mississippi. He admitted that what they hoped to do in the future was more important than what they had done in the past. They are now offering assistance to approximately seventy visually handicapped children in the public schools. This includes two groups of five each with special resource teachers. He hopes that in a comparatively short time they will be

able to offer all needed services to any blind children whose parents choose to place them in public schools. Robert Sibley, new director of Mississippi Industries for the Blind, gave a report on changes and progress made at that facility during the past three months. This included such goodies as twelve to fourteen paid holidays a year, three weeks' annual leave, three weeks' sick leave, and more than fifty thousand dollars in annual pay increases for blind workers.

Lieutenant Governor William Winter welcomed our guests at the banquet. In his comments he mentioned the problems of blind people, the desire of the State government to help, and the importance of the blind organizing to accomplish their goals.

The morning session was taken up with business primarily of local interest. Our guest of honor, NFB President Kenneth Jernigan, was drafted to preside over our election of officers, and he did his usual great job. Those elected were: president, E. U. Parker; first vice-president, Albert Beasley; second vice-president, Hugh Barlow; secretary, Doris Keith; treasurer, Jenny Fuqua. Board members elected were Horace Reed and Robert Bates.

Naturally, the star of the convention was our NFB President. He assisted us in business matters, as well as presiding over part of our business meeting. He gave two talks during the afternoon—one bringing us up to date on NAC, and the other reporting on the latest developments of the national organization. Of course, President Jernigan gave the principal address at the banquet. He traced the work *for* the blind in the United States during the past 150 years,

then traced the work *of* the blind, particularly during the past thirty-three years. He gave several examples of how the blind are now helping themselves through the National Federation.

For this writer's money (you will see this last word is meant literally) the highlight of the day occurred in a morning business session. The Mississippians were trying to arrange their finances to include sending their representatives to Washington but were hampered by an eminent money shortage. For the life of us we could not see how we were going to fund our budget for the next year and include activities that we should, such as the fight against NAC. Suddenly a financial magician in the person of our national President was on the floor. He showed us where the money was. It was right in that room. In less than fifteen minutes nearly \$1200 of it had been extracted from our collective pockets. That is even quicker than selling candy. Frankly, we were amazed at our own generosity in supporting our own State organization. My friend, that is leadership. We did not know we had that much money we had been overlooking. With this simple idea and perhaps a magic wand, Ken set an example that if used in every state might go a long way toward solving many NFB financial problems.

We adjourned with high spirits. We will always be grateful to our President who found the money we had overlooked and inspired us through our most successful statewide meeting. We will be better Federationists because this man took time out of his busy schedule to spend a day-and-a-half with a young and still-struggling NFB of Mississippi.

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## CONNECTICUT CONVENTION

BY

DOROTHY N. CAMPBELL

How very proud we are of our State organization and its identification with the National Federation of the Blind. We have only three local chapters, none of which is very large, and we have a good representation in members-at-large. Our convention and seminar is for one day only so far, but did we get a lot in this fall! As to the number of members and visitors present, that increases each year, with a corresponding increase in understanding, interest, and enthusiasm.

Again we were most lucky to have fine November weather since, though our State is small geographically, we do meet with real transportation problems. That is one of the reasons that this year we planned for our convention in the morning and our seminar in the afternoon, but with our banquet at noon. Ben Snow had arranged an excellent meeting place, at Emanuel Congregational Church, Hartford. There were ninety-five to one hundred present during the day. Each may speak but only members may vote.

The morning meeting was conducted by our president, the Reverend Howard E. May, who welcomed all, especially the three Executive Committee members from the national organization: the speaker of the day, Secretary Lawrence Marcelino; Treasurer Franklin VanVliet and Mrs. Gertrude VanVliet; and our own Shirley Lebowitz, of whom we are very proud. Visiting members from Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine were also specially welcomed.

The prayer of invocation in the morning was given by the Reverend William Shuster, the Methodist minister in Rockville, and member of the newly constituted Eastern Chapter.

Of course there was the reading of the minutes of last year's convention, and an up-to-date treasurer's report (the latter by Theresa Calusine). The presidents of each of our local chapters reported a busy year—working toward the goals of our great organization, and yet keeping local identity.

In his report, President May mentioned that “we deserve what we get,” and that we have been real go-getters this past year! First and foremost, supported by other organizations and by our State agency, we got our Civil Rights law passed. We successfully opposed a bill to create a workshop, sponsored by our Board of Education and Services for the Blind. Mary Brunoli and Ben Snow have faithfully edited and produced the *Connecticut Blind Federationist*. We have our own mailing address: NFB of Connecticut, Station A, Box 6433, Hartford, Connecticut 06106. President May's suggestion for a telephone listing for each area or chapter met with strong approval.

Shirley Lebowitz was most favorably impressed by an on-site acquaintance with the Commission for the Blind and its rehabilitation center and library in Iowa, and we must strive toward such a pattern here in Connecticut.

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Many of us have taken part in one or more of the demonstrations against NAC in its present form. Shirley and daughter Joyce have been in Washington to better inform our Congressmen concerning NAC, and also to push our Disability Insurance bill. Shirley made another trip to Boston in an effort to prevent the proposed FAA regulations for all handicapped people. We are most pleased that our Governor has appointed her to membership on our State Board of Education and Services for the Blind.

It was necessary to elect three members to our board of directors. They are Ruth Gordon and Marge Heath (both for two years), and Joyce Lebowitz (one year).

At our noon banquet we were joined by more guests and guest speakers. William Patton, Director, State Board of Education and Services for the Blind, brought special greetings from Governor Meskill, who could not be with us. "Why does NFB oppose NAC?" was the topic of a talk by Lawrence Marcelino. President May awarded charters to each local chapter on behalf of the State affiliate. The real highlight came when Shirley was asked by our toastmaster, Ben Snow, to present the very special award, a plaque, to State Representative Jean P. Thornton in appreciation of all she has done for us, but especially for her "concern, guidance, and outstanding work" toward the passage of our Civil Rights bill.

Our seminar emphasized this newly acquired Civil Rights law. John Dyre, a counselor in the State Employment Service, discussed "How to Get a Job." We must know what we want and what the employer wants. We can get assistance from our State agency, from the State

Employment Service, from a private agency, or apply directly. Before the interview there can be some advantage in having the handicap known by the prospective employer. Correspondence between the NFB of Connecticut's secretary and the Director of our own State agency was read to indicate the response toward placement of more blind as State employees.

The Director of Rehabilitation Services of the Albany Association for the Blind, Joseph Kirstein, emphasized the need for adequate training with dignity. With opportunity, people can rehabilitate themselves. Unless the blind person wishes to work in a sheltered workshop, that work should be only for the multihandicapped—but with dignity.

Lawrence Marcelino was our next speaker. He put great emphasis on the need to pass our Disability Insurance Bill, H.R. 6554, combining it with the Debt Ceiling bill as a must.

David Winchester, State Supervisor of Vending Stands, gave us the status of that work: twenty-six stands (six Federal, sixteen State, and four in private areas), with an average income for each operator of \$6,324—which is below the national average by more than \$500. Efforts are being made to protect and increase stands in Federal buildings. Mr. Winchester is very proud of the operators and their work.

Mr. Wallie Detrich, Rowe Enterprises, New Jersey, spoke and showed a film to prove that vending machines—with the blind operator trained even for dealing with minor repairs—are the coming thing. Kentucky, Alabama, and other states are already proof of this.

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Enforcement of our Civil Rights bill was the topic of our last speaker of the day, Attorney Howard Orinstein, Chief Counsel to the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities. The four areas of law enforced by that Commission are Connecticut fair employment practices, public accommodations, State contract compliance, and the State code of fair practices. If there is a grievance, the proper form must be filed. The investigator has the

power of subpoena but will attempt reconciliation. However, a case may even go to the United States Supreme Court. The Commission does not deal with criminal issues. Our act will require added study and interpretation—for instance the definition of “blindness” and the words “otherwise physically disabled.”

And so ended a very busy and profitable day.

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### KANSAS CONVENTION

BY

WALTER E. LONG

The fifth annual convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Kansas was held November 10, 11, and 12, 1973, at the Jayhawk Hotel in Topeka, Kansas.

Among the speakers were Mr. LePage from the Kansas Department of Revenue, who spoke on the Homestead Act; Burton Lewis, Superintendent of the School for the Visually Handicapped; Sherry Hokanson, Director of Library Services for the Blind; Harry Hayes, of the Division of Services for the Blind; Bill Richards, State Director of Social and Rehabilitation Services. Reed Graber spoke on the closed-circuit-TV reading-and-writing system and demonstrated it in the hotel lobby.

At the banquet on Saturday evening everyone enjoyed the humor of Blake Williamson, who served as master of ceremonies. After an excellent speech by NFB representative John Taylor, United States Senator Bob Dole spoke briefly on

issues confronting the Nation. A charter was presented to Esther Gunther, president of our new chapter in Wichita.

Sunday, November 11, was devoted entirely to Federation business. The convention passed the Resolutions: (1) opposing the proposed changes in Federal aviation regulations; (2) proposing that minimum-wage and retirement benefits be required for workers in sheltered shops; (3) setting the goal of equal opportunities for the blind and physically handicapped in employment; and (4) urging the Division of Services for the Blind of Kansas to withdraw from NAC accreditation; and (5) asking the State legislature to fund the Audio Reader.

Elected to the board of directors were: Stephen Schwed, Ken Tiede, Norman Laudemann, and Ruth Rigg. Prizes of cash and merchandise were drawn throughout the convention. Wichita was chosen as the 1974 convention site.

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## CALIFORNIA CONVENTION

BY

DON BROWN

The largest and most exciting National Federation of the Blind of California convention was held on October 19, 20, and 21, 1973, at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel. The enthusiastic crowd was a testimony to our affiliate president, Anthony Mannino, and his efforts in guiding us through the most successful year we have experienced, both legislatively and administratively. The Federationists filled the Hollywood Roosevelt, with many people having to stay at the nearby Holiday Inn. No one seemed to mind, for growing pains are welcome pains when the organization is growing stronger and larger.

Federationists and friends arrived Friday, October 19, during the morning, afternoon, and early evening. There was a large turnout for the first meeting at 7:00 p.m. when Dave Weddle and Alice Preston cochaired the Public Relations Committee of the NFBC.

The White Cane Fundraising Committee met at 8:00 p.m., capably chaired by Alfred Gil. The organization's fundraising activities and accomplishments were thoroughly aired, and a comprehensive report was given by President Mannino.

At 9:15 p.m., as tradition has it, the Credentials Committee met. Substituting for Beth Cassidy, who was unable to attend the convention because of serious illness in her family, was the ever-ready and capable Jim Willows.

Another long-standing tradition at Federation conventions is the open

Resolutions Committee meeting which meets at 9:15 p.m. on Friday evening. This year's Resolutions Committee was chaired by our hard-working first vice-president and editor of *The Blind Californian*, Lawrence (Muzzy) Marcelino. "Muzzy" ruled the committee with a fair hand, allowing all who wanted to speak an opportunity to express their opinions.

Let no one say that Federationists have not taken to heart the warning that too much work will make them like Jack—dull. To guard against that gloomy prediction, many parties among old and new friends were in progress into the wee hours of Saturday morning.

Saturday morning at 7:30 a.m., ninety Federationists were on hand for the executive committee breakfast meeting, thus proving that Federationists are a hardy group. President Mannino reported on the Federation's activities and successes since the spring convention. As evidence of our continuing expansion, President Mannino presented the Antelope Valley Chapter, NFBC, for membership as our fifty-second chapter. After the executive committee vote to admit this newest of affiliates, the new chapter's president, Joann Daugherty, expressed the appreciation of her chapter and promised their dedication to Federation goals.

At 9:00 a.m. President Mannino pounded the gavel and officially convened our semiannual convention. The morning session, which was stimulating and educational, proved to be a foretoken of

the entire convention. The Vocational Independence Program of the Junior Foundation for the Blind was discussed by Robert Humbert, who is the project director for VIP. Dan Smith, public affairs assistant, United California Bank, explained the Braille checking concept instituted by his bank. Mr. Smith related the history of the Braille checking system, its two-year success in New York City before moving west, and the success the program has been greeted with here in California.

The morning session ended with a bang as Robert Acosta, president of the NFB Teachers Division, moderated an exciting panel entitled "Philosophy and Goals of Teacher Training in Special Education." The panelists included Joy Efron, coordinator, Deaf-Blind Program, Special Education Department, California State University, Los Angeles; Alfred Gil, project chairman, Education Organization, NFBC; Gary Mackenstadt, president, South Bay Chapter, NFBC; and Dr. Rose Marie Swallow, coordinator, Blind and Partially Seeing Program, Special Education Department, California State University, Los Angeles. The panelists presented their own views on the current resource and itinerant programs, the School for the Blind, as well as teacher preparation for teachers of the blind. Needless to say, the discussion became heated as the panelists and audience delved into a variety of controversial issues surrounding these topics.

The convention recessed after this exciting panel for an hour and forty-five minutes, but not to rest, for Federationists in California use this period of time for the simultaneous filling of our stomachs with food and our minds with more information. There were two luncheons

with differing menus of both food and thought: the NFBC Teachers Division meeting, presided over by the president of the division, Dr. Ronald Miller, and the Alumni Association of the California School for the Blind luncheon meeting, led by the always stimulating Alfred Gil, president of the Alumni Association. Reports have it that both meetings matched their reputation for excellent-quality gastronomical and cerebral fare.

Dr. Isabel L. D. Grant, treasurer of the International Federation of the Blind, began the afternoon convention session with a report on the IFB. Dr. Grant reported on the outstanding work that American Federationists are doing on behalf of the IFB and, in particular, California's significant financial contributions to the international cause. She also urged as many Federationists as possible to attend the quinquennial convention of the IFB to be held this summer in Berlin, West Germany.

As all California Federationists know by now, our own Manuel Urena has been named Program Manager, Services for the Blind and Visually Handicapped, State Department of Rehabilitation. Manuel moderated an instructive panel entitled "Rehabilitation Services for the Blind and Visually Handicapped." Serving on the panel with Manuel was Assistant Program Manager Glenn Sterling; as well as John Millen, coordinator, Southern California Region; James Riley, coordinator for the Northern California Region; and William Yates, Coordinator for the Los Angeles Region. Manuel began the discussion by stating that he not only deemed it a pleasure to speak to an NFBC convention but a serious responsibility. He pledged his energies and abilities to do for

rehabilitation in California what Perry Sundquist has done for social welfare here.

The 1973 Amendments to the Social Security Act were analyzed by the Editor of *The Braille Monitor*, Perry Sundquist. Perry presented a comprehensive and erudite analysis of the amendments, pointing out that the passage of H.R. 1 culminated the NFB's long struggle and marked the achievement of seven Federation goals. Perry asked the question, "How many of the millions of aged and disabled Americans that will receive increased income and benefits will realize the debt they owe to the dedication and determination of the National Federation of the Blind?" The complete paper that Perry presented was published in full in the November 1973 issue of *The Braille Monitor*.

At 4:00 p.m. the convention adjourned for the meetings of special-interest groups. Conventioners had their choice from the following appetizing list: our Credit Union meeting presided over by President Mannino, or the California Vending Stand Operators meeting led by Tom Long, or the National Association of Blind Secretaries and Transcribers meeting with Marie Hatanaka in charge, or the NFBC Student Division with Rob Turner in the lead, or the California Industries for the Blind Workers with Fred Barrington acting as moderator.

At 7:00 p.m. over 270 Federationists jammed into the main hall for what was doubtless the largest and most successful banquet in the history of our state affiliate. Alfred Gil, chairman of the Newel Perry Scholarship Committee, was in charge of the awarding of scholarships to blind college and university students totaling ten

thousand dollars. Many of the winners from Southern California were on hand for the awarding ceremony. They expressed their thanks for the Federation's help and pledged their efforts to the cause of the Federation. Dr. Earl Brian, Secretary, Health and Welfare Agency, State of California, delivered an address that was the crown to a jewel-studded evening. Many Federationists who were unable to purchase banquet tickets crowded into the hall to hear Dr. Brian speak, swelling to well over three hundred the number who heard this outstanding address. Dr. Brian pledged his support to us for a meaningful State supplement to the Federal Aid to the Blind grant and his support to work shoulder to shoulder with us against the highly discriminatory regulations that are currently being proposed by the Federal Aviation Administration. The Federationists climaxed Dr. Brian's address with a tumultuous standing ovation.

Sunday morning, bright and early, the Orientation Center Alumni Association breakfast began promptly at 7:30 a.m., with a good turnout of shaky but determined Federationists. President Mannino sounded the gavel at 9:15 a.m. for the beginning of the Sunday sessions. The first business of the day was the report of the Resolutions Committee by this year's committee chairman, Lawrence Marcelino. The convention acted affirmatively on nine meaningful Resolutions, including a strongly worded Resolution clearly delineating our position on the intolerable behavior of the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped and a Resolution speaking to the discriminatory, restrictive, and custodial regulations being proposed by the Federal Aviation Administration, as well as a variety of well-thought-through

and well-written Resolutions dealing with the broad spectrum of grievances held by the organized blind. President Mannino urged that when the Resolutions are mailed out to the chapters, the chapters also send copies of the Resolutions, along with a brief cover letter, to the appropriate parties.

The Blind Teleservice Training Program was thoroughly explained by William Dauterman, coordinator, Special Training Program for the Blind, Los Angeles City College. The training program lasts thirteen weeks and is a new breakthrough in the Federal Government's efforts to hire the blind.

The last item of the Sunday morning session was by far the most provocative. It was entitled "Concerned Campus Organizations and the National Federation of the Blind of California." It was a panel presentation moderated by President Mannino. The participants included Edward Crespín, Orange County Chapter, NFBC; Bob Knowles, cochairman, Disabled Student Alliance; Brenda Premo, administrative assistant, Handicapped Students Program, California State University at Long Beach; and Rob Turner, President, NFBC Student Division. The panelists discussed the relationship between blind college students and the Coalition for Disabled Students. President Mannino concluded the panel with a strong statement for ongoing and open communication between the NFB of California and the Disabled Student Coalition. As President Mannino stated, "They have a great deal to learn from us, and we should offer them all the help we can."

The convention adjourned for lunch with over eighty hungry Federationists attending the Chapter Presidents' Luncheon presided over by Kathy Herald, president of the Long Beach Chapter, NFBC. Those in attendance were treated to a variety of important items that time did not allow for during the general convention sessions.

The final session began with a comprehensive report by President Mannino on the State organization's activities since the last convention. He summarized our successes, reported on the activities of the statewide Advisory Committee to the Department of Rehabilitation, of which he is the chairman, the significance of Manuel Urena as Program Manager within the Department of Rehabilitation, and the latest efforts by the NFBC on the NAC front. President Mannino led a delegation of California Federationists to Washington, D.C., and vigorously and effectively persuaded our State's Congressmen and Senators of the damage that NAC is doing to the blind of this country.

Elections are always an exciting event, and this year three executive committee positions were up for grabs. The following three active Federationists were elected: Alfred Gil, Cid Urena, and Juanita Bey. Congratulations to all of them.

The final item of the final session of the fall convention was a report on the 1973 State legislation affecting the blind, with Lawrence "Muzzy" Marcelino moderating the panel of active volunteer Federationists who gave of their time and energies in what can only be called a phenomenal legislative track record. They were Lily Craft, Melba Galloway, LaVyrle Johnson, Perry Sundquist, and Cid Urena.



Thus ended the biggest and, perhaps, best of our many great State conventions. Those who had the opportunity to attend this convention

went away renewed with fresh dedication to the Federation goals of security, equality, and opportunity for all of the blind.

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### NEW JERSEY CONVENTION

The sixteenth annual convention of the New Jersey Council of the Blind was held Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, October 26-28, 1973. As early as Thursday, October 25, blind people and their friends and relatives began converging on the Empress Motel in Asbury Park, New Jersey. The first order of business on Friday was a well-attended executive committee meeting, at 8:30 p.m. By the time the Hospitality Room opened, thirty minutes later, some seventy-one people had already registered. Those gathered in the Hospitality Room enjoyed seeing old friends and meeting new ones. As you read on, you will see that Mildred Piechota, convention chairman, and Myles Crosby, program chairman, did themselves proud.

Junior Women's Clubs of Asbury Park and Freehold took care of registration and banquet ticket sales. Girl and Boy Scouts from the Asbury Park and Avon area acted as guides. Programs were brailled by Volunteers for the Blind of Ocean County. Two exhibits were set up in the lobby. One was by the New Jersey Commission for the Blind, demonstrating and selling blind-made articles; this exhibit was just there for the Saturday session. The other was from Science for the Blind, which stayed for the entire convention. Dolly Burck and Fran Crosby of the Ladies Auxiliary of the New Jersey Blind Men's Association conducted drawings and were kept quite busy throughout the entire convention, because

of the many valuable door prizes donated by members and their friends.

On Saturday morning at 10:30 a.m. sharp, when President George E. Burck brought down the gavel, there were more than one hundred people in the Regency Room of the motel. The invocation was pronounced by Brigadier Paul A. Harvey of the Salvation Army; this was followed by welcoming addresses from Deputy-Mayor William Green of Asbury Park and Edward F. Slott, president of the Empress Motel. Then came the rollcall and report of the chapters, indicating an upswing in membership and a greater interest in legislation for the blind. President Burck then reported on the progress of the organization and the status of the twelve Resolutions adopted at the 1972 Convention. We then adjourned for lunch until 2:00 p.m.

At the start of the afternoon session, we heard presentations by Walter Scott, Assistant Director of the New Jersey Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped; Dr. Tom Benham of Science for the Blind; Congressman James J. Howard of the Third Congressional District of New Jersey; and George Topal, Operations Supervisor of the Asbury Park Social Security Office. Following each of these presentations was a lively and informative question-and-answer period. John N. Taylor of the National Federation



of the Blind added greatly to these question-and-answer sessions. The afternoon concluded with the reading and adoption of six Resolutions.

The banquet Saturday evening began at 7:00 p.m. with an invocation by the Reverend John E. Manola of Trinity Episcopal Church, Red Bank, New Jersey. The true highlight of the banquet was the excellent address delivered by the NFB's John N. Taylor. President George E. Burck (as usual) batted a thousand as toastmaster. Oh yes! We forgot to tell you that we had 115 people at our banquet.

On Sunday morning, we held our regular business meeting at which thirty-four delegates representing all of our twelve chapters plus some fifty other interested people were in attendance. The membership application and constitution of the Blind and Visually Impaired People of Ocean County were read and referred back to the local chapters for ratification at our January 1974 meeting. NFB representative John Taylor extended greetings from President Kenneth Jernigan. He outlined future legislative plans and recommended that we get behind them 100%.

The following officers were elected for 1973-1974: president, Myles Crosby of Leonardo; first vice-president, Edward Fedush of Garfield; second vice-president, Martin Freedman of Lyndhurst; secretary, Mildred Tremple of Trenton; and treasurer, Mildred Piechota of Belmar. President Crosby then appointed three executive committee members: Mary Rondinara of Neshanic; Herbert Falkenstein III of Norwood; and Stanley Spaide of Audubon.

Gerald Monroe, president of the recently organized Blind and Visually Impaired People of Ocean County, then addressed the assembly. He expressed the hope that his organization would be unanimously elected to membership. He also pledged full support for all of our programs.

President Dolly Burck of the Ladies Auxiliary of the New Jersey Blind Men's Association reported that they were contributing \$128.50 to the New Jersey Council of the Blind.

With a feeling that much had been accomplished in the last year and that much needed to be done in the coming year, President Crosby adjourned the convention and we wended our way home for another year.

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## RECIPE OF THE MONTH

SUBMITTED BY

MILLIE HOLT

### PIN MONEY RELISH

[Editor's Note.—Millie Holt is an assistant in the NFB Treasurer's Office.]

#### Ingredients

4 cups coarsely-ground red sweet peppers  
2 cups coarsely-ground cucumber  
or watermelon rind  
1 cup coarsely-ground onion  
1 tablespoon salt  
1¼ cups sugar  
1¼ cups white vinegar

1 package sure-jell  
8-10 drops red food coloring

#### Method

Combine peppers, watermelon rind, and onion, and add 1 tablespoon salt. Add sugar and white vinegar. Boil until transparent and slightly syrupy. Remove from heat. Add sure-jell and red food coloring.

Pour into sterilized jars and seal.

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### MONITOR MINIATURES

The State of California went through nine months of struggle before it finally implemented H.R. 1, the Supplemental Security Income plan of the Federal Government. The problem arose between the Governor, who wished to provide for flat grants of \$221 for the aged and disabled and \$237 for the blind, and the Democrat-controlled legislature, which held out for higher amounts. The Regular Session of 1973 adjourned on September 14 with no plan for implementing H.R. 1. The Governor then decided to implement the plan on his own by using regulations of the Department of Social Welfare. Some fourteen welfare-rights organizations took the issue to court. On November 19 the Third District Court of Appeals held unanimously that the Governor could not pay funds in the form of State supplementation directly to the Federal Government and that, unless the legislature

acted before January 1, 1974, the flat grants would be \$252 a month for the blind, \$246 for the aged, and \$230 for the disabled. Faced with this adverse court ruling and the loss of \$600 million a year in Federal administrative money, the Governor reached agreement with the legislative leadership and called a Special Session of the legislature for December 4. On December 5 the legislature adopted Assembly Bill 134 by a vote of sixty-nine to one in the Assembly and twenty-eight to five in the Senate. Acting Governor Reinecke signed the bill immediately.

The legislature set a flat grant of \$265 for a blind individual and \$235 a month for an aged or disabled individual, beginning January 1, 1974. The amount of income would be \$285 a month for a blind individual if he had \$20 of income from any source. For a married couple, both

recipients and at least one who is blind, the amount is \$500 per month. This sum may be reduced to \$485 per month until June 30, 1974 (when the SSI payment for a couple is raised by \$15). For a married couple, both of whom qualify as aged or disabled, the amount is \$440 per month. An aged or disabled person, or a married couple either aged or disabled, whose living arrangement prevents preparation of his or their meals at home, shall be entitled to an additional \$25 a month for an individual, or \$50 for a couple.

In a very real sense these high grants in Aid to the Blind represent the culmination of efforts to help blind persons in needy circumstances begun in California by Dr. Newel Perry some fifty-four years ago and so ably carried on by the late Professor Jacobus (Chick) tenBroek. The effort was climaxed as a result of the quiet but tremendously effective leadership of the president of the NFB of California, Tony Mannino.

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A substantial eleven-percent increase in social-security benefits passed the House of Representatives in November and was sent on to the Senate. It would give 28 million Americans a seven-percent boost in April and an additional four percent in July. The vote was 391 to 20. A similar measure already has been approved by the Senate Finance Committee, with one difference. The seven-percent increase would be effective upon enactment. The measure which the Senate is considering would supersede a bill passed earlier in 1973 authorizing a 5.9-percent boost in benefits next July.

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On Saturday December 8, 1973, a new chapter of the National Federation of the Blind was established in Talladega, Alabama. The name of our new chapter is the Racing City Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Alabama. Those elected were: president, Miles Raines, Jr.; vice-president, Deal Mahone; secretary, Mary Arother; treasurer, Patsy J. Raines; board members, Joe Shaidnagle, Oliver Carter, and Robert Arother.

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Mr. Domenic Fiato writes: "Our Lawrence chapter has a new president. He is Mr. Sam Randazzo, 115 Garden Street, Lawrence, Massachusetts 01841."

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Roy Zuvers, who works at the Kansas City Data Processing Center, United States Department of Agriculture, puts his Optacon to good use on the job and was recently given a writeup in the Department's weekly publication for employees.

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According to HEW, three-fifths (62.5 percent) of the people who receive Old Age Assistance money payments under state-Federal public-assistance programs in 1973 also received cash insurance benefits under the Federal Social Security OASDI program, ranging all the way, among the 50 states, from Nevada with the highest percentage (78.5) to Florida (40.5).

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A national survey has disclosed that 334 blind men and women are teaching in

elementary and secondary schools. In addition, eight hundred blind college students are now taking teacher-training courses.

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*We The Blind*, publication of the Pennsylvania Federation of the Blind, reports that as a result of a grant from the Nevil Trust Fund amounting to \$1,300,000, the ten-story Nevil Building for the Blind has been established in downtown Philadelphia. The Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped is the first tenant. There is a large display area for aids and appliances, as well as a large reading room for adult and child patrons. Much space has been set aside for the various types of library materials. In addition, rooms are available to provide various specialized services to the blind.

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Frank Sinatra continues as sight-saving chairman of the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness for the second consecutive year. During the organization's sixty-fifth anniversary, he is appearing in public-service spots, and will lend his support to other Society activities.

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On November 25, 1973, the Capitol Chapter (Sacramento), NFB of California, elected the following officers to serve during 1974: president, Lon Sumner, 1214 P Street, Apt. 3, Sacramento, California 95814; first vice-president, Wilda Baughn; second vice-president, Phyllis Bradford; secretary, Dorothy Scott; treasurer, Emily Sundquist; delegate, Tom Long; alternate delegate, John Ryan.

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A New Jersey woman, who has been blind since childhood, received her first social-security disability check because of a change in the law which was effective in January 1973. Before the law was changed, blind persons generally had to have worked five of the ten years before they became disabled by blindness. Now they can qualify if they worked long enough at any time on jobs covered by social security. This lady's only work under social security was during World War II when she packed candy for the troops overseas. It was for only two years but was enough to give her the minimum six quarters of coverage. HEW estimates that about thirty thousand blind people became eligible for monthly social-security payments under the new law.

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United States Senator Thomas F. Eagleton of Missouri is vigorously supporting proposed legislation in the Congress to provide more adequate funding for libraries generally. Federal support for public libraries began in 1957 with a \$2 million appropriation under the Library Services Act. If Federal matching funds under the Library Services Act are either withdrawn or reduced, the homebound, the handicapped, the aging—all recipients of outreach library services—will undoubtedly be among those who suffer most as a result.

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A three-judge Federal court in Boise, Idaho, upheld the legality of provisions of Idaho's Medicaid program limiting the reimbursement of hospitals and nursing homes for care of the elderly. The decision said individual states have broad authority in devising Medicaid programs, including

the placement of maximum limitations on reimbursements for services. The court held that the only limit on state authority is that the maximum may not be in excess of reasonable costs. It said such limitations "reflect a legitimate public purpose of maximizing such care and services for eligible dependent persons." The ruling said institutions participating in the Medicaid program do so voluntarily, and "the providers of services pursuant to title XIX of the Social Security Act are not required to participate in the state Medicaid program and such participation is voluntary." The court also ruled that the plaintiffs (eleven Idaho hospitals and six nursing homes) must reimburse the State for costs incurred in defending the action.

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Recently a young Frenchman, when he became blind, did not stop being what he was, a skiing instructor at Aspen, Colorado. He is the founder and chairman of an organization called Blind Outdoor Leisure Development Program in that city. Dr. Isabelle L. D. Grant writes that this is just another example of blind persons doing their own *thing*, whatever it may be.

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Starting on January 1, 1974, approximately 23 million Medicare beneficiaries will be paying \$12 more toward their hospitalization deductible, bringing their payment to \$84. This figure represents more than a 100-percent increase since 1966 when Medicare was inaugurated and the deductible was \$40. According to HEW the increase was

necessary to offset rising hospital costs, approved by the Cost of Living Council.

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Winona Parker, Editor of *SAM*, publication of the NFB of Oregon, writes: "The new Commission policy will go into effect on December 26, 1973, regarding sponsorship of financial assistance for persons attending colleges and universities. You, as a student, should anticipate receiving a notice of the proposed adoption of this rule regarding college training for blind persons. This involves the planned training at an institution of higher learning and must be part of an approved vocational rehabilitation plan. What is being recommended is that every student under this agency's sponsorship attending colleges or universities make every effort to obtain cash grants, scholarships, or loans from other sources to pay for the planned training in whole or in part. Early in the fall the Commission handed down a new ruling to its college students. Readers were, henceforth, to be paid the minimum wage for their services. At the time this ruling was promulgated, the Congress had sent a proposal to the President which would have raised the national minimum wage to two dollars an hour. The President vetoed the proposal. The veto was unexpected, so we were told, by the Commission, which had expected it to pass with the President's signature. However, the ruling stands in regard to reader services to college students. The ruling states that the amount to be paid to readers shall not exceed \$1.60 per hour except in very unusual circumstances such as a special scholastic or research project. I find this new ruling untenable. Any person who has been a student knows of the great importance of his readers to him. I have always paid my

readers two dollars an hour. It is an insult to a good reader to ask him, or her, to work for less, and it is a matter that adds an added handicap to study. I ask you, how much is a reader worth?"

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The National Federation of the Blind of Maryland sends word of newly-elected officers of the following chapters:

Greater Baltimore Chapter: president, Ned Graham; vice-president, Paul Flynn; second vice-president, Clara Leatherbury; secretary, Roger Brown; treasurer, Bernard Anshel; board members, Willie Thompson and Ravenel Thompson; representative to State board, Ned Graham.

Eastern Shore Federation: president, Dorothy Hall; first vice-president, Florence Squires; second vice-president, Clarence Hutt; secretary, Mazie Handy; treasurer, Elsie Scott; board members, Henrietta Skinner and Dorothy Collins.

Twin Counties Chapter: president, Wesley Williams; first vice-president, William Garrett; second vice-president, Shelly Marcus; secretary, Roger Petersen; treasurer, Clara Sisselman; board members, Marilyn Nelson, Luther Hinant, and Anna Fryiez.

Cumberland Chapter: president, Gerald Conrad; first vice-president, Oliver Evans; second vice-president, Albert Gregory; secretary, Ruth Twigg; treasurer, Georgia Myers; board representative, Floyd Myers.

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